



19th GENERAL CHAPTER 2014

OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF BORDEAUX

NO: 20

Suore della Santa Famiglia di Bordeaux, Via dei Casali Santovetti 58, 00165 Roma, Italia

4 June

Thanksgiving, Blessing, Sending...

These three words formed the undercurrent of all that was done this morning, an expression of the call to go out and be life, give life...

The Morning Prayer, through a series of movements, brought home to each one in the assembly

the sense of her wholeness, uniqueness, her need to create her own space,

and, at the same time,

her connectedness with the earth and sky, from which we draw energy and light for all we do.



Through gestures,

all that is negative is thrust away and all that we need – peace, joy, unity, goodness... – is brought in;

we connect with all humankind, in unity, so that God's project can reign on earth;

we connect with the wisdom of all who have gone before us, from the first human beings and all humankind of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

with hands on heart, all in the assembly gave thanks for life and love and the capacity to continue to announce God's project.



Then, recognising the sacred dimension of each one, they greeted one another using the Indian term,

NAMASTHE

A short PowerPoint Presentation, composed by Sr. Ana Maria (Unit of Latin America - Argentina), in which she drew together in a creative way what she had experienced of the Chapter from outside.



In conclusion, the Capitulants were invited to express in a word what the Chapter had meant for them.

There was a light-hearted moment when, in humorous terms and affecting the tone of a radio news presenter, Tere gave an account of some of the amusing ‘behind the scenes’ events that had happened during the Chapter. There were also some gentle references to inconveniences felt in the assemblies and the house amenities, all of which were accepted or tolerated with humour or endurance depending on each one’s temperament.

Formal Closure of the Chapter



It fell to Ana Maria, General Leader, to bring the Chapter to a close. In her address she said that the theme had been a challenge and one that is ongoing. Now, we are more conscious than ever of the call to Mission and the need to respond as an Institute. “We are coming to the end of a very rich stage that is calling us to be open to a new beginning.”

Ana Maria enumerated the strong calls she had picked up urging us to go on a process of transformation for life and Mission:

- * *Exodus, walking as one with humanity on the move*
- * *A call to be rooted in the spirit of God Alone like Jesus, Mary and Joseph which is our raison d’etre as Holy Family Institute in the world*
- * *A call to think, discern and integrate at all levels Councils, Units and Continents*
- * *A call to delve deeply into our decree, Vowed for Mission.*
- * *Live an integrated and prophetic leadership for the Mission*

An important step will be the transmission and implementation of the Chapter so that what we have decided together will not be idle words. Let us transmit with fidelity and freedom what has been truly significant in the experience of the General Chapter.

Let us hear again the words of our Founder: “Nothing henceforth can prevent your course”.
NOTHING.

“Let us welcome again the words of Jesus, ‘as the Father sent me, I am sending you. Do not be afraid. I am with you until the end of time’.”

Thanks

No one was forgotten in Ana Maria’s words of thanks to all who had been involved in the preparation, and ongoing process of the Chapter, including the members of the Institute who had committed themselves wholeheartedly to the preparation through their assemblies and Unit Chapters and continued to follow the process as it unfolded.

Ana Maria then asked the Capitulants to raise their green cards if they agreed to close the 19th General Chapter. Agreement was unanimous.

Then the Capitulants signed the Minutes of the Chapter.

When that was done, they sang the Magnificat and went from the Chapter room to prepare for the Eucharist at 12 noon.

The sisters of the Generalate and as many of the sisters from the communities of Italy as were able to attend joined the Capitulants for the Eucharist and the festive meal that followed.

Fr. Louie Lougan, Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, presided at a joyful, intercultural celebration of communion in Christ with the whole universe.



His homily was brief and original. He gave a task to the congregation. In five minutes, say three words,

**THANKSGIVING – BLESSING -
SENDING**
to one another.

It took more than five minutes!

The celebration continued in the dining room after which the goodbyes began. Those who were staying in Rome for a few days more moved to the Generalate. Departures from Enrico De Ossò begin early tomorrow, 5 June.

*"Change is always a risk. But it's also a risk not to change. Even a greater risk, I think."
Cardinal Kasper*



News Readers

