



acts

of the Superior Council
of the Salesian Society
of St John Bosco

N^o. 305

SPECIAL ISSUE FOR



22nd GENERAL CHAPTER

**This booklet contains nos. 1 2 3 4 from ASC 305,
the special issue for 22nd General Chapter**

**DIREZIONE GENERALE
OPERE DON BOSCO
R O M A**

Editrice S.D.B.

Extra-commercial edition

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Esse Gi Esse - Roma

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1. LETTER OF THE RECTOR MAJOR

Father Egidio VIGANÒ

THE 22nd GENERAL CHAPTER

GC22: Introduction - Convocation of the Chapter - An event that challenges our spiritual maturity - Various stages in the lengthy process of renewal - GC22's task, to finalise and actuate - The Constitutions, our covenant with God - Approval of the Constitutions by the Holy See - The provincial chapters - Conclusion.

Dear Confreres,

The time for the next General Chapter is fast approaching. It is a Chapter that will mark the final phase in the reflection and renewal of the last score of years since Vatican II.

For this reason I call on you to make serious preparations for this important event.

1. Constitutions art. 151.

Our Constitutions stress the spiritual character and the deep human value of every General Chapter,¹ and at the same time determine the basic norms for its execution.

Article 155 of the Constitutions establishes that the General Chapter be "convoked by the Rector Major"; and article 99 of the Regulations lays down the details of the convocation: there is to be a year's notice, "by means of a circular letter, which shall indicate the purpose, place and opening date of the Chapter".

This present letter, then, is the official communication that GC22 is to take place; it also offers a number of points for consideration regarding its purpose, its scope and its special characteristics,

in order that the whole Congregation, "under the guidance of the Holy Spirit" may assiduously seek to ascertain at this given moment of history "the will of the Heavenly Father so as to serve the Church better".²

2. *ibid.*

Convocation of the Chapter

The 22nd General Chapter (GC22) will begin on 9 January 1984 at the Generalate, via della Pisana 1111, Rome. It will start with the spiritual retreat of the capitulars. Its only topic and principal scope will be the *study of the text of the new Constitutions and Regulations* with a view to their definitive approval by the Holy See. In accordance with what is laid down in the Constitutions,³ the Chapter will also elect the Rector Major and the members of the Superior Council for the succeeding six years according to the expiry terms indicated in the same Constitutions.

3. *ibid.* art. 153, 132, 145, 147.

It will also study and analyse the *General Report on the state of the Congregation* presented by the Rector Major according to article 106 of the Regulations.

I have already communicated to you that the Moderator⁴ is Father Juan Edmundo Vecchi, Councillor for the Youth Apostolate Department. All information, proposals and study contributions should be referred to him.

4. Regulations art. 100.

The *Technical Commission* has also been constituted; and together with the Moderator it has established the procedure for the preparation for the Chapter and has studied ways to promote "the active interest, collaboration and participation of all members".⁵ The contents of this issue of

5. *ibid.*

the Acts constitute the results of the efforts of the Technical Commission.

It will also be necessary to pay special heed to the further communications of the Moderator, and whatever will be communicated from time to time in the future Acts of the Superior Council.

An event that challenges our spiritual maturity

The General Council is much more than an event that falls due according to the requirements of the Constitutions: it is a *privileged occasion for us to manifest our loyalty to our vocation*. Therefore it is an *ecclesial event* and bids us as Salesians to take our stance before the People of God, "faithful to the Gospel and our Founder's charism, and sensitive to the needs of times and places".⁶

6. v. Constitutions art. 151.

As religious we must see ourselves called by the Spirit of the Lord to offer the young a valid and relevant saving action in fidelity to Don Bosco's revealing inspiration. Vatican II has been an insistent challenge to all religious institutes to refurbish in fidelity and Christian courage the special saving mission of their various Founders. The inspired message that the young expect from us Salesians today is, in the first place, the novelty of a heart afire with that pastoral charity defined by Don Bosco as *Da mihi animas caetera tolle*.

The General Chapter will be the yardstick of our spiritual maturity, of our apostolic genuineness, our ability to replan together our special kind of holiness in response to the cultural changes and the new requirements of the young.

GC22 must be totally aligned with the Holy

Spirit; it must move the Congregation to take careful stock of the particular period of man's history we are traversing; it must inspire us with a practical sympathy for the needs of the world and the wants of the poor and the little ones; and it must proceed along the lines of Don Bosco's initial project with its transcendent values inspired by the Holy Spirit and destined to develop vigorously, sloughing off its merely transient guises.

The Chapter must be characterised by certain spiritual aspects — a brotherly encounter of Salesians with the most diverse cultural and apostolic experiences; its members must be imbued with a radiant and radical *sequela Christi*, a pastoral predilection for the young, a united vocation-sense that bespeaks total fidelity to Don Bosco, a dedicated willingness to examine and assess with spiritual freedom and collaboration, and a personal and community docility to the Holy Spirit who is the true source of that unanimity for which the Chapter will strive.

That GC22 may really be *a gift of the Spirit and an ecclesial event*, both we (the Congregation) and the whole Salesian Family must get down on our knees: this means intensifying our personal and community prayer, listening to our brothers, reading the signs of the times, adding a liturgical dimension to our suffering, multiplying our daily sacrifices and generous acts of charity.

Various stages in the lengthy process of renewal⁷

7. Perfectae Caritatis 2.

GC22 will not begin its work from scratch: in fact it will be already well advanced in the

process demanded by the Church to swing the Congregation into the orbit of Vatican II. The work we are invited to do on our Constitutions and Regulations is actually a revision, a coordination, an elucidation and a finalising of more than fifteen years of labour preceded and developed by three General Chapters of particular importance in the life of our Salesian vocation.

The main stages of development are identifiable by the particular scope of each of the General Chapters. Each stage carried its special stimulus characterised by the practical needs of the times and the level of reflection achieved by the Congregation. More than fifteen years of careful and detailed work in a period of "accelerated history" is no small feat. Four earnest and complementary general Chapters cannot be brushed off lightly as mere whimsies. GC19 established an *awareness* of the signs of the times and began *preparations*; GC20 swung the *Congregation into orbit*; GC21 reviewed, rectified, *confirmed and elucidated*; and GC22 must *re-examine, clarify, complete, perfect and finalise*.

A brief word about the preceding stages — not presuming to make any general judgements but simply desiring to shed further light on the aims of the approaching GC22.

* GC19 (8 April to 10 June 1965) took place whilst Vatican II was drawing to a close. The Council had already expressed many of its ideas on renewal and its main thrusts; however, the last session with its promulgation of documents was yet to come. There was a feeling that the Chapter, and hence the Congregation, "had arrived at a turning point." "During the work of the

Chapter one always felt that all those present were anxiously watching the Vatican Ecumenical Council. The atmosphere in Rome clearly encouraged this springtime of expectancy so full of promise".⁸ GC19 certainly felt the first flush of the great conciliar event: it affected our renewed grasp of the Church's mission in the world, the deep forces of the religious life and its community and ecclesial aspect, the revision of pastoral work with its requirements for pluralism and decentralisation. However, in general, people had only a fairly limited perception of the demands of the Council; indeed not all could yet have gauged the profound ecclesiological renewal of Vatican II. Still, the chapter members breathed something of its freshness.

8. GC19: Introduction,
p. 5.

In a special way GC19 studied and deepened the understanding and acceptance of the responsibility of a General Chapter as the wielder of supreme authority in the Congregation. The Chapter spent a considerable amount of time on this matter and compiled a set of regulations that made the functioning of a General Chapter equal to the grave task required of it in the years that followed. Furthermore the general process of updating was set in motion through the treatment of such topics as the religious life, spiritual direction, the Salesian brother, and the beginnings of new structures of government (the Superior Council, Regionals, vicars, and better participation in Chapters). With the *motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* came the proclamation of a Special General Chapter for all religious institutes. Coming on the heels of GC19, so to speak, there was a tendency to look to the future rather than to the present, and thus quite a few forward-looking directives of GC19 never got off the ground.

9. *Ecclesiae Sanctae* 11,
1 (3.4.6).

● GC20 (10 June 1971 to 5 January 1972) was the Special General Chapter (SGC) convoked in obedience to *Ecclesiae Sanctae*.⁹ The *motu proprio* called for a revision and suitable renewal of the norms and customs of the Congregation according to the spirit of the Founder so as to meet the requirements of the times; this was to be implemented by “an extensive and free consultation of the members” and an extraordinary General Chapter; there was also the mandate to revise the Constitutions, with the proviso that “the aim, nature and character of the Institute be respected”.

Thus the Special General Chapters of religious institutes were called on to promote the specific renewal desired by the Council.¹⁰

10. v. *Lumen Gentium*
44; *Perfectae Caritatis*
2, 3, 4.

Our own Special General Chapter was prepared for by no less than two provincial chapters and followed by a third; this entailed much work in assisting the confreres to adjust to the new ideas. Indeed this period engaged the Congregation in deep community study and was one of the highlights in our history. Its findings presented an extensive and profound analysis of the various aspects of our evangelical lives, our communion, the criteria of our pastoral work, the Salesian Family, etc. It sought to clarify each one of these topics in the light of the Gospel, the Council teachings, genuine tradition and the new values indicated by the signs of the times.¹¹

11. v. SGC 20.

The Chapter reformulated the text of the Constitutions, suiting the language and the set-up to the Council directives; it welded into one text the spiritual wealth of the Salesian vocation and the basic norms that regulate our Salesian life.¹²

12. v. *Constitutions*, art.
200.

It set out in the *Regulations* the practical way for all to live the *Constitutions*, leaving particular

matters of a local nature and the demands of special situations to be regulated by the provinces in their provincial directories.

SGC completed an enormous task with substantial success; and it was a work admired also by non-Salesian authorities and scholars.

GC21 (23 October 1977 to 12 February 1978) gathered together the result of this first "trial period" of the new Constitutions, prepared from an assessment of the practical life in relation to the text of the Constitutions. It also concentrated on an in-depth study of a number of essential Salesian topics: the Preventive System, Salesian formation, the Salesian brother, and the restructuring of the UPS. It gave the Congregation a further six years of practical trial for the renewed Holy Rule.¹³

13. GC21 373.

Regarding the text of the Constitutions, GC21 pointed out clear and positive aspects that were unfortunately not always carried out in practice; also certain wordings and arrangements that needed clarifying; and finally some matters that lacked inspiration or were not in accordance with proper norms. On the basis of this examination GC21 noted the following points:

● There was an overall acceptance of the new Constitutions by the provinces and the individual confreres "in a spirit of faith and with the will to live them as a gift of the Holy Spirit who makes Don Bosco's spirit present and active in our time".¹⁴

14. v. GC21 372.

● There was not yet sufficient knowledge, assimilation and experience of the new text.¹⁵

15. v. GC21 372.

● Experience showed there were some urgent emendations needed; these are to be found in Document 5 of the GC21 Acts.

- Certain points needed further consideration in order to work out a more satisfactory definition.

GC22's task: to finalise and actuate

GC22 will be the final effort of the postconciliar quest to draw up satisfactorily and in harmony with the life of the Church *the lines of renewal our Salesian vocation must follow* as we approach the third millennium. It is thus *not simply a point of arrival* but rather an authoritative launching pad for *a new beginning*. Its work is of extraordinary importance: an authentic examination of the long process undertaken and an adequate definition of the lines of force that will guide the Congregation in its conciliar orbit.

It will be of immense value to us to have our Salesian vocation clearly delineated, redefined and up-to-date, so that we are assured of our Salesian identity as we take up the complex challenge of our times: this is the heritage we have received from our origins and a sacred bequest we make to future generations.

Our Father had a lively concern regarding the Constitutions, for he saw them as the projection of the permanent spirit of the Founder and its translation into practical terms. He too had to outline the distinctive character of his Society of St Francis of Sales and make sure of the future of the apostolic holiness practised at Valdocco — in other words, express in the words of the Constitutions what was the reality tested by the life and inspiration of the inner heart. We are well aware of the travail Don Bosco experienced in drafting and seeking approval for his Constitutions: he had to face a long line

of vexatious difficulties both ecclesiastical and civil. Nothing held him back, however, for he was convinced that he had a task to fulfil for the Lord for the salvation of innumerable young people.

A similar fundamental mandate will face GC22, as it finalises a lengthy renewal process no less rich in challenges and prospects.

The essential continuity and lively loyalty in all three texts (that composed by Don Bosco, that of GC20 and the future text of GC22) must assure us of our bond with our Father and Founder, his original inspiration, and the gift he received from the Holy Spirit for the service of the Church, the young and the masses.

Volume XI of the *Memorie Biografiche*¹⁶ records an interesting conversation between Don Bosco and Don Barberis. It was in 1875, shortly after the approval of the Constitutions.

"You will fulfil the work I have begun", said Don Bosco, "I have drawn the sketches and you will fill in the colours"; to which Don Barberis answered, "Let's hope we don't spoil your good work, Don Bosco!"

"Oh no. My sketch is a poor copy of the Congregation; I leave it for my future sons to make a 'fair copy'."

Surely this is a challenge to us, and we accept it in the pleasing thought that it was more or less foreseen by Don Bosco.

We have gone through a lengthy period based on the draft of the renewed Constitutions and have put them through a practical test of twelve years; we have earnestly examined how the text fits in with our lives and how our lives fit in with the Salesian ideal; all this will help build a laughing pad that will ensure that the "newly projected

16. *Memorie Biografiche*
XI 309.

charism of Don Bosco" in the Church will be ever more genuine and efficacious.

Soon we shall write "The end" to our period of analysis and experimentation — which has allowed us to absorb the spirit of Vatican II. Then will begin an era that will be necessarily lengthy; and it will be for the Congregation a greatly intensified spiritual phase (a charismatic phase in the conciliar sense of the word), when our work will be strong and convincing, profoundly renewed and authentically Salesian. The future of the Congregation is bound to the vitality of the charism as described in the Constitutions and which must explode into lusty life in our communities. It is up to GC22 to lay the foundations for this phase of more intense Salesian authenticity.

The Constitutions: our covenant with God

We look at our Constitutions with the eye of faith: indeed they "outline for us the essential features of our vocation and offer us a way of life".¹⁷ They formulate for us our *sequela Christi* in the service of the young. They summarise and express our unique traditions, our way of life, our distinctive ethos, our practical procedure for holiness.

We Salesians constitute a group with a distinctive spiritual character: we look to Don Bosco as our "patriarch" and *see our Constitutions as our covenant with God*.¹⁸

This covenant each one of us has signed with his *religious profession — the most expressive act of our baptismal freedom*. This was no vague generic promise: it was a commitment to follow Jesus Christ and live his counsels according to the Salesian Constitutions. They became for us the

17. Constitutions: Foreword.

18. Don Rua: Circular Letters, 1.12.1909.

authoritative and precise yardstick of our life and fidelity; they are our clear and objective stimulus in our daily conversion; they hold up the challenge of the Gospel to our human weakness.

The Constitutions are the *Rule of Life* for the Congregation. It is to them alone that the Church looks when it recognises our Salesian charism and life and incorporates the Congregation into its work of salvation.

Over the centuries many generations of men of different cultures have been formed in godliness by various religious Rules; these latter have expressed, formulated and proposed a practical method of the *sequela Christi* without cramping personal talents or shutting out the needs of the times. For us Salesians too there have been many generations who have learned to follow Jesus Christ according to the Gospel way traced out by Don Bosco in the Constitutions of the Society of St Francis of Sales. It would be a mistake to continue to think that our Constitutions are a mere set of norms: we must view them rather as a vast orbit of a distinctive way of holiness. The *Foreword* of the present text expresses well their nature and scope: "As disciples of the Lord we find in the law a path that leads to love. Our living Rule is Jesus Christ, the Saviour proclaimed in the Gospel. He lives today in the Church and in the world. We see him especially in Don Bosco who dedicated his life to the young". It is the Lord who is the vital centre around whom we build our whole project. He is our motivation for breaking with the world and accepting a radical way of life that points the way to being a convinced disciple rapt in the Lord. In him do we find new strength and joy each day to make a fresh start along the arduous path of holiness.

The Gospel project of the Constitutions is not generic, however. It avoids presenting our "God-experience" in an abstract form in the manner of a small doctrinal treatise on the religious life. It does not set out a logical list of general principles: but it does give a faithful description of a specific practical way of life objectively lived as a "God-experience"; in other words, that life of commitment lived by Don Bosco and his first Salesians — still able to inspire and guide our lives and our practical options. The saying at Valdocco in those days was, "I'm staying with Don Bosco"; and those early followers continually relived the spirit of Don Bosco the Founder.

To sum up — the renewed text completes the long process of revision, and will be valid insofar as it will be spiritual and concrete and an impelling force that will urge the confreres to *replan their holiness together* according to the Gospel challenge lived by Don Bosco and demanded by these post-conciliar times. Thus shall we be *evangelisers of the young* to whom we have been sent by Christ and his Church to form into *honest citizens and good Christians*.

Approval of the Constitutions by the Holy See

Don Bosco had a deep sense of the mystery of the Church and the special ministry of Peter therein according to the will of Christ. He drew his sons close to the Pope with a variety of motives, all of them inducing total loyalty and evincing the *conviction of faith* and the *bond of affection*. His attitude was not a kind of "situation-policy": it was the very supporting basis of his spirit. It was not just

the way of acting according to the ecclesiological style of the 19th century: it was an ascetical option, a deliberate and explicit element of his life-involvement in the mystery of the Church. He constantly repeated that the Roman Pontiff was the foundation rock of our faith; and he insisted with his pupils and his Salesians that the Pope was the greatest benefactor of the Congregation.

He worked untiringly that his Congregation be recognised by the Holy See. He was convinced that as long as his Society was closely linked to Peter it would safely ride out the stormy waters of his times — and indeed the tempests of the future too. His joy knew no bounds when on 3 April 1874 the text of his Constitutions received official approval from Rome. "We should welcome this fact", he wrote, "as amongst the most glorious in the annals of our Society, since through it we have the assurance that in observing our rules we rest upon a firm and secure basis".¹⁹

Papal approval was not for Don Bosco (nor for us today) a mere formal act: it was and is the seal of God, through the ministry of Peter, that authenticates our Gospel project of life and action.

It belongs to the Pope and the Hierarchy to recognise charisms²⁰ and "to regulate with wise laws the practice of the evangelical counsels".²¹

The Pope is especially assisted by the Holy Spirit in the approving of religious charisms and making an authentic judgement "on their genuineness and their proper exercise". Even though a General Chapter is the supreme authority for the Society,²² it is subject to the higher ministry of Peter and the authority of the Holy See in the approval of the text of the Constitutions.

Vatican II has accustomed us as religious to

19. Constitutions: Appendix p. 233.

20 v. Lumen Gentium 12.

21. Lumen Gentium 45; *Mutuae Relationes* 8, 9c.

22. Constitutions art. 152.

ensconce ourselves within the mystery of the Church. Born through the Holy Spirit who lives in the Church we develop as its members and put our labours at its service.

In this sense our exemption is an expression of our true belonging to the Church: "It is for the good of the Church"²³ that the Supreme Pontiff grants exemption to Institutes so that they may the more adequately express their specific identity and dedicate themselves to the common good with particular generosity and on a much wider scale (v. no. 8)."²⁴

Let us work hard then at revising the text of our Constitutions that "service" a charism proper to the Church (our charism, as Salesians of Don Bosco); let us see the approval of the Holy See as a help to us to live up to our unique vocation more enthusiastically, and offer the local Churches in these days of cultural upheaval, our recognised distinctive identity and Salesian mission.

The Provincial Chapters

A word on the importance of the next provincial chapter that will take place in accordance with articles 177-180 of the Constitutions.

The Salesian community is world-wide²⁵ and divided into provinces that live in communion. It is through the provinces that the Congregation is introduced into the different cultures and put into contact with the various local situations, thus building up a world-scale unity of rich variety.

This makes it clear that there is no question of a genuine General Chapter without serious and responsible Provincial Chapters. We have the

23. v. Lumen Gentium
45; Christus Dominus
35-3.

24. Mutuae Relationes
22.

25. v. Constitutions
art. 56.

practical task of revising the text of our Constitutions: hence the provincial chapters are necessarily geared to the General Chapter and closely linked with it: their main aim is to involve the confreres in participating in this historical responsibility of the Congregation and in living their Salesian communion at world level.

The provincial chapters are also a help for the provincial community to increase the basic values of our Salesian identity: "The provincial chapter is a fraternal gathering in which the local communities strengthen their solidarity within the provincial community through their common concern with the more important problems of the province".²⁶

26. Constitutions art.
177.

Indeed the theme of GC22 is particularly suitable for intensifying such values,

If the provincial chapter is treated as a time of personal and community revision and a period for the discernment of our own genuine Salesianity (a kind of assessment of the efficacy of the demands of the Constitutions in renewing our personal lives) then the thought put into the chapter will be far more fruitful.

To achieve optimum results *preparations for the provincial chapter must involve every community and every confrere*. The provincial and his council and the various departments in each province must take suitable and effective steps to encourage local communities and confreres to participate in the serious examination of the text of the Constitutions so as to render it as perfect as possible.

Our dutiful involvement in the successful outcome of GC22 will be an earnest of the communion and maturity of the Congregation. Every province has had an accumulation of experiences in these past years: they will constitute an invaluable and

meaningful contribution and should be forwarded to the Moderator as basic material for the work of GC22.

Conclusion

Dear confreres, let us prepare for our next General Chapter with our eyes on our Father Don Bosco. During the long period taken in drafting the 1874 Constitutions he was ever attentive to the signs of the Holy Spirit in the simple day to day events as well as in the more serious meetings with the Pope, the civil authorities and the meticulous ecclesiastical departments appointed for the approval of the text.

We too must pay constant attention to God as he speaks to us through present-day situations.

The fundamental contribution required of all confreres will consist in study, active involvement, intense prayer and generous sacrifices of supplication; they will listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Congregation today through his inspirations and the signs of the times, and see whether the text of the Constitutions trues up with them.

Each one of us must meditate with lively faith on the text of the Constitutions and Regulations and renew our deep and practical loyalty to our Salesian Gospel project. None of us must shirk the work undertaken by the community to build up a sensitivity for this documentary revision so important for our vocation in the Church.

That our personal participation may prove fruitful, let us work hard, let us offer God our external and interior difficulties and sufferings, let us renew ourselves in sincere prayer, let us practise com-

munion and contribute our own personal considered opinions.

Provincials and their councils should work out some practical ways so that the suggestions of this letter do not remain mere theory: there could be a special invocation at Lauds and Vespers; the hymns to the Holy Spirit could be recited more frequently; suitably timed paraliturgies could be held, we could place special emphasis on our small Friday, Lenten and Advent penances. Far from being pietistic, these practices will express a wealth of meaning and will bring to the fore our desire and ardent prayer that the most important member of our next General Chapter will truly be the Holy Spirit himself.

Mary proved a true Mother in the infancy of our Congregation; her we always recognise as our Mistress and Guide; she is the Spouse of the Spirit; she is our Help of Christians: may she assist us now in this important work.

Fraternally yours in Don Bosco,

Father EGIDIO VIGANÒ,
Rector Major.

2. CALENDAR FOR GC22

July 1982

The Rector Major officially convokes the 22nd General Chapter (GC22) in accordance with article 155 of the Constitutions and article 99 of the Regulations. The *special issue of the ASC* relating to this will be sent to each individual confrere.

Furthermore the Moderator sends to the provincials printed leaflets for the minutes, sample forms for the proposals, and the survey questionnaire.

August 1982 - May 1983

The provinces prepare for and hold their provincial chapters (Const. 178). In fixing the dates for provincial chapters the following deadlines should be borne in mind.

31 May 1983

By this date the following documents should reach Rome: ¹

— Minutes of the provincial chapters relating to the election of delegates.

— Proposals of provincial chapters regarding the Constitutions and Regulations.

— Replies of the provincial chapters to the survey questionnaire.

¹ Address for all correspondence and matters relating to GC22:

The Moderator of GC22
via della Pisana 1111
CP 9092
00163 Roma
ITALY

— Any other topics studied by the provinces according to their requirements — to be submitted to the Rector Major and the Superior Council in accordance with art. 178 of the Constitutions.

— The contributions of individual confreres forwarded to the GC22 Moderator regarding the Constitutions and Regulations.

The precapitular Commission will find it difficult to consider proposals that arrive after 31 May 1983.

June 1983 - July 1983

All this material will be set in order and classified by a group at headquarters. Meantime the Rector Major appoints the Precapitular Commission to prepare the documents to be sent to those who will participate in GC22 (Reg. 101).

August 1983 - October 1983

The tasks of the precapitular Commission are carried out. Appointment of a commission for the examination of the minutes of the elections of the delegates of the provinces (Reg. 102).

October 1983 - November 1983

The work schemes prepared by the Precapitular Commission are printed and forwarded to provincials and delegates.

If it is considered necessary, after examining the observations sent in by the provincial chapters, headquarters will also forward *Proposals for provisional regulations* for the beginning of the work of GC22.

December 1983

The members of GC22 study the documents.

9 January 1984

GC22 begins.

3. OUTLINES FOR STUDY

3.1 Foreword

In accordance with the *motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* (II 12-14) the SGC made a careful revision of the Constitutions and Regulations and approved the new version for a period of six years.

Then GC21 revised them again in a general way in line with the proposals received from the 1977 provincial chapters and individual confreres as well as the contents of the *Report of the Rector Major on the Congregation* (October 1977). GC21 found that there was overall acceptance of the Constitutions on the part of the Congregation (GC21 372); that the Constitutions conformed to Church doctrine and the spirit of the Founder (GC21 373). It decided to confirm the present text of the Salesian Constitutions and prolonged the *approval ad experimentum* for another six years, making a few modifications it deemed necessary. It left the final work on the Constitutions and Regulations to GC22, through the Superior Council; this work would be assisted by the observations of the preparatory provincial chapters and individual confreres.

The maximum period of experiment allowed by the *motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae* (II 12-14) is twelve years: so it will be GC22's task to draw up the definitive version of the Constitutions to be presented to the Holy See for final approval.

In accordance with the above-mentioned documents of GC21, the Precapitular Technical Commission has drawn up these Outlines for Study in which are listed certain matters regarding the Constitutions and General Regulations.

3.2 How to use the Outlines for study

2

The provinces and their chapters will make a close study of the *text of the Constitutions and Regulations with a view to having it definitively approved*. This study may examine the themes in the various parts, chapters and individual articles of the Constitutions and Regulations; or it may bring out worthwhile new perspectives — bearing in mind, naturally, the particular character of the Constitutions and Regulations.

In the *Outlines for study* those points in the Constitutions and Regulations are listed

- which the recent General Chapters have raised again and again as needing further precise clarification; and

- which therefore call for thoughtful exploration by the Congregation.

The *Outlines for study* treats these points in four steps:

- the main articles of the Constitutions and Regulations referring to these points are indicated;

- a brief synopsis is given of the thought of GC20 and GC21 regarding the issues raised;

- one or two statements then sum up the problem as it affects us today; and

- finally questions are asked that focus on the essence of the problem.

These questions are meant to encourage community study, so that the provincial chapters will be able to make practical proposals on the various articles for the Constitutions for the use of GC22.

The points listed are not necessarily exhaustive. They cover the five parts of the present Constitutions and deal with the main matters raised in the planning of religious and Salesian life today. If they are pondered and studied according to the criteria given in this document they will open up wider perspectives and inspire a great variety of proposals.

The practical directions found in marginal nos. 17-25 will make this *Outlines for study* an even more effective help.

3.3 Themes

3

THE SALESIANS
OF DON BOSCO
IN THE CHURCH

Const. ch. I

Form of the Congregation

Const. 3 35-38

Reg. 81 (GC21 440); 88b (GC21 441); 92

4

The SGC gave ample treatment to the “form” of the Society as being an “Institute of brotherly and apostolic life” (v. SGC et seq.). It also traced out the basic characteristics of members co-responsible in our mission: Salesian priests, brothers, deacons (v. SGC 141-150).

GC21 considered it opportune to make a profound study of the identity of the Salesian priest according to the Constitutions and SGC, and sought to make his specific formation more adequate (v. SGC 298). It also explored further the identity of the Salesian brother and drew up a document setting out his distinctive character and special functions in the Congregation according to the thought of Don Bosco (v. GC21 166-211).

- * Do you consider the special character of the Salesian priest sufficiently defined?
- * Do you consider the special character of the Salesian brother sufficiently defined?
- * Do you consider that the relationship between priest and brother in the community and in our mission is sufficiently clear?

The Salesian Family

5

Const. 5 141

Reg. 30 31

The SGC considered the updating of the Salesian Family as an indispensable element of our postconciliar renewal: it asserted in the Constitutions that its existence was a spiritual fact and it enumerated its constituent elements (Const. 5; SGC 151 et seq.).

GC21 confirmed these SGC findings in their historical, pastoral and dynamic aspects; it also detailed the Congregation's task of stimulating and animating the Salesian Family; it gave a member of the Superior Council the duty of promoting these activities (GC21 402-403, modified text of Const. 141).

- * Do you consider that a greater clarification of the identity of the Salesian Family is necessary regarding the manner of membership of the various groups? and also regarding collaboration in view of our common mission?
- * Regarding our role and competency (at local, provincial and world level) in relation to the Salesian Family: are they sufficiently clear and precise?

CONSTITUTIONS - PART I

OUR

APOSTOLIC MISSION

Const. chs. II-VI

Our charges

6

Const. 2 7 9-16 17-19 26 31

Reg. 7 12 24

In the Constitutions SGC defined the Congregation's mission regarding both charges and content. In particular it stressed the priority of our mission for the young; and it

affirmed that even the Congregation's various activities for adults are strictly linked to this priority for the young.

The matter was taken up again by GC21 — which clearly confirmed the youth-priority of our mission, and further explained the significance of Salesian adult apostolate (v. CG21 139 142: parishes).

GC21 made no changes in the text of the Constitutions, since it considered the text sufficiently clear.

Nevertheless some clarifications in the text of the Constitutions may seem appropriate in order to eliminate possible conflicting notions regarding the priority-elements of our mission: youth, adults, the working classes.

- * Do the Constitutions clearly express the priority of our mission for the young?
- * When speaking of our mission for adults and the masses, is the “youth-priority” of our mission always sufficiently respected?
- * Is the formulation of the Congregation's missionary commitment sufficiently harmonised with our “youth-priority”?

Our pastoral action

Const. 17-25 26-30

Reg. 1-29

7

SGC dealt thoroughly with our pastoral action, pointing out its distinctive characteristics; it also dealt with the practical fusion of evangelisation and catechesis with human education and development, the union between development of both person and environment, and our typical community way of achieving a single programme from different contributions and forging ahead working co-responsibly, witnessing to the values we propose.

GC21 was influenced by *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and gave

particular attention to our work of evangelisation; it emphasised certain distinctive characteristics and gave fresh stimulus to a number of our distinctive elements and procedures (v. GC21 80-165).

There is a need to clear up the meaning of apostolate: some see it as solely a religious service and would take Salesians away from the field of education and human development; others put such a radical accentuation on the latter that would exclude evangelisation — they make them the principal thrust of the Salesian mission.

- * Do you consider that the elements of the Salesian apostolate are clearly expressed, connected and set out according to priority?
- * Do you consider that the characteristics of our education and catechesis are sufficiently clear? do they afford suitable guidance for the activities of our communities and our confreres?
- * Do you consider that our participation in the local Church is well expressed? likewise our community way of conducting pastoral programmes? and our criteria regarding traditional and innovatory “presences”?

The Preventive System

8

Const. 25 39 (v. 16 45-47 49)
Reg. 3 4

SGC decided to add Don Bosco's treatise on the Preventive System as an appendix to the Constitutions; and expressed the System's educational and pastoral significance in the Constitutions art. 25 at the end of the chapter dealing with “the service our mission entails”.

GC21 (80-105), when speaking of evangelisation, put strong emphasis on the importance of renewing the Preventive

System according to the needs of times and places; it insisted on the duty local and provincial communities had to work out their Salesian educational and pastoral project.

According to GC21 "the Preventive System in the thought of Don Bosco and Salesian tradition tends to identify itself increasingly more and more with the 'Salesian spirit': it is a pedagogy, an apostolate and a spirituality all combined" (GC21 96).

In the reformulation of art. 39 of the Constitutions on those co-responsible for our mission, CG21 introduced a further explicit facet into the Preventive System (GC21 387-388).

* Is the pedagogical, pastoral and spiritual wealth of the Preventive System sufficiently expressed in the Constitutions?

PART II
OUR LIFE
OF COMMUNION
Const. ch. VII-VIII

Relationship between mission and communion

Const. 4 34 50-57

9

SGC, in ch. V of the Constitutions (on co-responsibility for our mission), makes it clear that the mission is entrusted to the community (art. 34). Then in ch. VII, speaking of *the fraternal and apostolic community* it insists on the apostolic aspect as indispensable and distinctive in our living together in brotherly union.

GC21 then, treating of the general theme of evangelisation, stressed the ecclesial and pastoral character of the Salesian community and its particular way of animating Salesian education and pastoral action (GC21 62-79). Furthermore it recalled the duties of the rector not only as a religious superior

and spiritual guide within the community, but also as pastoral guide of the Salesian mission and coordinator of educational commitments (GC21 49-57).

* Do you consider that the apostolic aspect in the chapters dedicated to our life of communion should be reinforced, lessened, or kept as it is?

The Superior in the local community

10

Const. 35 54 93 94 96 131 182 184

Reg. 71b (GC21 435); 153-159 166-167

SGC, speaking of the rector, placed the accent on his responsibility as being the heart of the community and its religious and pastoral guide (SGC 526 678 644-646).

GC21, in the general theme of evangelisation, re-examined the nature of the rector; and in answer to the requests of many provincial chapters and individual confreres, sketched out in full the ministry of the rector as the principal animator of the life and apostolate of the local community; it listed in importance the roles entrusted to him by the Constitutions. Furthermore it modified art. 94 of the Constitutions on community obedience, detailing better the superior's role in encouraging dialogue and being responsible for final decisions (GC21 391-392). It introduced a new article in the General Regulations on the importance of the brotherly talk as an ideal occasion for dialogue between superior and confreres (GC21 435-436).

• Do you consider the characteristics and duties of the rector are expressed adequately?

• Do you consider that the rector's roles are adequately listed in importance?

The Salesian community at various levels

Const. 55-57 162 181

Reg. 33

11

When dealing with the fraternal and apostolic community SGC introduced into the Constitutions an explicit reference to world and provincial levels (Const. 56 57). Indeed the provincial community could be considered a “discovery” of SGC (SGC 512).

GC21 too confirmed the value of the provincial community as having the responsibility for an educational and pastoral project adapted to the local needs (CG21 105).

- Do you consider that the provincial community is sufficiently described not only as a structure but also as a centre of animation and coordination of the Salesian presence in a determined territory?

- In the light of twelve years of experience, do you consider that there is a sufficiently clear exposition of the provincial and world communities and their reciprocal relationships?

The praying community

Const. 58-67 48

Reg. 44-54

12

SGC carefully analysed and expounded the matter of prayer: it urged both a renewal of prayer in a changing world and the requirements of an apostolic community (Const. ch. VIII: arts. 58-67). The Salesian way of prayer then is described in the chapter of the Constitutions dealing with the Salesian spirit (art. 48).

GC21 made a further study of prayer in relation to evangelisation, making particular reference to the apostolic character and the Salesian distinctiveness of our prayer (GC21

42-45). Despite the opportunity of revision, GC21 made no change in this matter except for a modification to art. 46 of the Regulations (GC21 431-432).

- Do you consider that the text of the Constitutions corresponds to the distinctiveness of Salesian prayer (active life, pastoral action, Salesian style, etc.)?

- In the light of our twelve years of experience now, what do you think of the way the Constitutions and Regulations set out the various occasions and forms of community and personal prayer?

PART III

OUR CONSECRATION

Const. chs. IX-X-XI-XII

13

Salesian religious consecration

Const. 68-74 (v. also Vows)

As the whole Congregation prepared for SGC there was one matter that was deliberated in depth: the nature or identity of the Congregation in the light of Vatican II and Salesian tradition: examined in a special way was the *relationship between two of the elements that make up our life — consecration and mission*. These two elements could be seen as the two aims of the Congregation.

SGC tackled the problem with study and prayer and arrived at a solution truly shared by the capitulars (SGC 106-127).

Arts. 3 and 68 of the Constitutions summed up the conclusions of SGC.

In preparation for GC21 some provincial chapters

proposed that certain matters still needed to be cleared up in some articles in the Constitutions. CG21 carried out the clarification in the following ways: “religious consecration” or “religious life” was to be taken in the sense of the overall Salesian religious life — in other words, Salesian religious life comprised three reciprocally integrating elements: the practice of the evangelical counsels, the apostolic mission and life in communion (v. the Rector Major’s clarification in his closing address at the Chapter — GC21 578).

GC21 left the terminology of the new Constitutions in this regard to be considered by GC22.

- Do you think that our mission, our practice of the evangelical counsels and our community life are sufficiently clarified by the Constitutions’ description of our consecration?

- Do you consider that the Constitutions make a good combination of the basic elements of the Salesian life: mission, practice of the evangelical counsels and community life?

- What do you think of the use of the phrases *religious consecration* or *religious life* to indicate the overall Salesian religious life?

Vows

14

Chastity: Const. 75-80 Reg. 55-56

Poverty: Const. 81-90 Reg. 57-71

Obedience: Const. 91-98 (GC21 391-392) Reg. 71b (GC21 435-436)

SGC accepted the requests of provincial chapters in line with conciliar theology. On the one hand it wanted the practice of the vows solidly based on the Gospel, the *sequela Christi*; on the other hand it sought to preserve the Salesian aspects of both the mission of the Congregation and its distinctive way of living the spirit of the counsels. Also in the Constitutions one sees the link between vows and mission.

Observations from provincial chapters and individual

confreres made during the preparations for GC21 requested that the presentation of the religious vows should show a clearer link between the practice of the evangelical counsels and the specific Salesian mission.

- Do you consider that the text of the Constitutions makes an adequate presentation of the evangelical, ascetical, pastoral and juridical aspects?

- Do you consider that the practice of the evangelical counsels as presented in the Constitutions and Regulations puts sufficient emphasis on the distinctive character of the Salesian vocation?

- Do you consider that the Constitutions and Regulations sufficiently indicate the twofold level of the practice of the three vows—*personal* and (local and provincial) *community*?

- Do you think the text should show a greater link between the vows and apostolic mission in accordance with distinctive Salesian characteristics?

- Have you any suggestions regarding what order the three vows should be listed in?

PART IV

FORMATION AND FIDELITY

Const. chs. XIII-XIV-XV

Reg. ch. XI

15

Formation of Salesians

Const. 99-122 (GC21 393-397)

Reg. 72-94 (GC21 437-443)

In its general revision SGC also tackled Salesian formation (SGC 657-672) — its general aspects and its different stages. The new Constitutions and Regulations carry the results of these deliberations.

On account of the proposals received from the provinces, the report of the Rector Major and the documents of the Formation Department, GC21 considered that the whole matter of formation needed urgent re-examination. It concentrated on unity of formation, its role, and the characteristics of each stage, and also on ongoing formation (CG21 240 et seq.).

The fruit of this study is to be found in GC21's document 3, and the revision of arts. in both Constitutions and Regulations (GC21 393-397 and 437-443).

GC21 asked the Rector Major and his Council to draw up the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis Salesianae*. This latter was promulgated by the Rector Major on 31 January 1981.

- Do you consider that ongoing formation should also be incorporated into the general aspects of formation as a basic attitude and criterion?

- Do you think there should be a revision of the articles of the Constitutions and Regulations that deal with the different stages of formation — so as to attain a better systemization and make for clearer distinctions in the stages and their content?

- What aspects of the application of the *Ratio* do you think worthy of incorporating into the formation section of the Constitutions and Regulations?

PART V

ORGANISATION OF OUR SOCIETY

Const. ch. XVI-XVII-XVIII-XIX
Reg. ch. XII-XIII-XIV-XV

Principles and structures

Const. 123-194 (GC21 398-415)
Reg. 95-169 (GC21 444-445)

16

SGC studied the wealth of material from the Congregation for the structures of government participation at the various

levels. It inserted into the text the general principles of dialogue and co-responsibility, subsidiarity and decentralisation and translated them into practical ways for the structures at the different levels.

It made it clear that structures are subservient to persons, mission and communion; at world level it stressed the aspect of unity; at other levels decentralisation and pluralism.

Among the proposals submitted to GC21 for the revision of the Constitutions the matters most fully discussed related to structures.

In the light of six years of experience GC21 examined the provincial chapters and largely confirmed the deliberations of SGC contained in the text of the Constitutions. It made a few modifications at world level for the better organisation and competence of the Departments and for participation in the General Chapter (GC21 398-441 444-445); at provincial level for vice-provinces (*visitatorie*) and delegations (GC21 412-413); at local level for the composition of the community council (GC21 414-415).

The experience of the last two six-year periods should help us discern whether the text of the Constitutions with its GC21 modifications should be confirmed or not — whether it expresses the general principles and criteria (v. ch. XVI of the Constitutions) and whether the modified structures at the various levels have proved practicable.

In practice then,

- Do you consider that there is a clear and practicable exposition of the general principles and criteria relating to authority as a service? co-responsibility and dialogue? subsidiarity and decentralisation? (Const. 123-127).

World level

- Do you consider that the character and functions of the office of the Rector Major's Vicar are adequately described? (Const. 138).

- Do you consider that sufficiently clear definition has been given to the competency of the Councillors General in charge of special sectors? and the type of service they should render to the Congregation? (Const. 139-142).

- Do you consider the character and role of the office of the Regional Councillor are sufficiently clear and precise? (Const. 144; Reg. 123-129).

- In the case of provincial conferences, do you consider that sufficiently clear definition has been given to their nature, role, competency and forms for functioning? (Const. 160-161; Reg. 123-125 130).

- Do you consider that the composition of the General Chapter should be confirmed? in particular the principle regulating the number of provincial delegates? (Const. 156; GC21 404-405).

Provincial level

- Do you consider that the composition of the provincial chapter should be confirmed? in particular the criterion regulating the number of the delegates of the confreres of the province? (Const. 179).

- Do you consider that the frequency of provincial chapters ("ordinarily every three years") should be confirmed (Const. 178) for the whole Congregation?

- Do you consider that we should retain consultation as a means of confrere-participation in the appointment of provincials? (Const. 169).

- Do you consider the present formulation of art. 131 of the Regulations is sufficient?

- Do you consider art. 172 of the Constitutions sufficiently complete in defining the tasks of the provincial council? also in view of the animation of the province?

• Do you consider the present rules suitable regulating the appointment of provincial councillors? (Const. 174).

• Do you consider that the description of the character and role of the vice-provincial is sufficient? (Const. 175).

Local level

• Do you consider that the provincial consultation should be confirmed as a means of participation in the appointments of rectors?

• Is the present formulation of Const. 183 adequate?

• Do you consider sufficient and complete the definition of the duties of the community council? (Const. 185 188).

• Should the present composition of the council be confirmed (v. Const. 186-187 189)? i.e., vice-rector and bursar by right of the Constitutions, members appointed by the provincial, members elected by the confreres?

• Do you consider sufficiently clear and practicable the rules regulating the role and duties of the assembly of confreres in view of their participation and co-responsibility? (Const. 194; Reg. 168-169).

17

3.4 Practical directions for Outlines for study

18

Criteria for revision of the Constitutions and Regulations

For the revision of the Constitutions and Regulations it is obligatory to refer to the criteria that have authoritatively guided the work carried out so far. These criteria are to be found in *Perfectae Caritatis* 2-3 and *Ecclesiae Sanctae* 11 12-14. Most of these criteria are summarised in the *Declaration* made by the SGC at the beginning of the renewed Constitutions (p. 11); they were also the guidelines for the revision made by

GC21 (no. 371). Listed in order of importance they are criteria relating to the *Gospel and the Church*; *Salesian historicity*; *juridical and normative characteristics*; *classification of norms*; *experience*; and *form, style and logical distribution of the rules*. None of these criteria can be used independently, but only in conjunction with the others. They refer to the Constitutions — which constitute a corpus that is at the same time both one and multiple.

Evangelical-ecclesial criterion

19

Through this criterion we judge whether the Constitutions are adequately in accord with the Gospel and conciliar principles regulating religious life, its charismatic nature in the following of Christ, and its participation in the mystery and mission of the Church (v. ES II 12; Const. p. 11; GC21 371); and whether they inspire members to live this life with sincerity.

Salesian historicity criterion

20

Through this criterion we judge whether the present text of the Constitutions reaches out beyond the changing facts of history and grasps all those values that make up the indispensable heritage of the Congregation (PC 1); in other words spirit of the Founder, its continuity, the proper aims of the Institute and healthy Salesian tradition (ES 12; Const. p. 11; GC21 371).

Juridical-normative criterion

21

Through this criterion we have the guarantee that the text of the Constitutions contains the juridical directives essentially and clearly so that they adequately define the character, end and means of the Institute (ES II 12b; GC21 371). This criterion must naturally be united in harmony with the first two criteria so that the text of the Constitutions will blend the

spiritual (criteria 1 & 2) with the juridical (criterion 3): thus the “basic text of the Institute will be permeated by a spirit which is authentic and a law which is alive” (ES II 12).

22

Criterion for classifying the articles

In the light of this criterion one judges the nature, juridical value, and adequacy of each article in the whole normative corpus of the Institute. According to this judgement the articles are placed either in the Constitutions, the General Regulations, or in the Provincial Directories or Regulations.

The Constitutions (CG21 377-380) represent and express the *basic law* of the Congregation, its *Rule of Life*, the *identity of the Salesian and the Congregation*. They delineate Salesian spiritual characteristics and community structure, they are intimately linked to the charismatic nature of our religious project. They provide a typical description of the experience of the Holy Spirit that constitutes the distinctive character of our Congregation in the Church.

The Constitutions have a universal value everywhere and always. They are approved by the Holy See, who has the final say regarding any change in them.

Consequently, in the light of what has been said above, the *Constitutions* should contain:

a) the inspiration and aims of the Founder regarding the nature, distinctive ethos, and sound traditions of the Institute;

b) the characteristic significance of the sacred bonds; in other words, the practical application of the evangelical counsels and community life to which the members commit themselves by their religious profession;

c) the basic juridical rules regarding the discipline of the Institute and its members, the government, acceptance of members and their formation;

d) a suitable blending of spiritual and juridical elements, bearing in mind that rules must not be multiplied without necessity.

"Elements that specify the practical implementation of the text of the Constitutions" should be transferred from the Constitutions to the Regulations (Const. p. 11). Furthermore all elements should be excluded "that are outmoded or subject to modification according to the customs of particular times or usages of a purely local nature" (ES II 14).

The General Regulations (GC21 381) represent the ensemble of dispositions that translate the general elements of the Constitutions, our *Rule of Life*, into rules that suit the changing times, i.e., practical applications of universal import to be carried out throughout the whole Congregation (Const. p. 6).

The Regulations are approved by the General Chapter and may be suitably modified or adapted (but always in accord with the Constitutions) without recourse to the Holy See.

The Regulations form with the Constitutions one single binding corpus, even though they may have a different kind of obligation on account of the matter they contain.

The Provincial Directories or Regulations (v. GC21 384) constitute the ensemble of particular rulings that apply the general legislation (Constitutions, Regulations, regional ecclesiastical laws) to the local situation of each province.

They are established by the provincial chapter and approved by the Rector Major and his council, and obtain only within the province.

Criterion of experience

The revision of the text of the Constitutions must use the criterion of experience to judge whether the rules are sound and suitable in the face of the practicalities of life.

23

24

25

This criterion is not absolute in itself; but it must not be underestimated because of its reference to practical living; and thus it was accepted by GC21. *Ecclesiae Sanctae* made provision for the renewed Constitutions to have an *experimental phase* of six years — which could be prolonged for another six years (ES II 6). GC21 judged that the experience of the Congregation in the first six years carried out the meaning of an “experiential criterion”, and on the basis of this same criterion it left to GC22 the further assessment of the second six-year period.

26

Criterion for literary form, style and logical distribution

This criterion is used for choosing the literary form of the text of the Constitutions and Regulations, i.e., its structure, style and language.

Since our Salesian heritage has its own organic unity, its contents will be set out in parts, chapters and articles; these must be systematically coordinated in such a way that the various elements of our heritage will be described in a clear, complete and balanced manner.

The style should be in keeping with our distinctive Salesian qualities: hence it should echo the simple, brief and calm expression found in the Constitutions drawn up by Don Bosco himself.

This criterion also governs the correct use of language, a linguistic expression acceptable to modern times, clear and uniform terminology, careful checking of biblical and Salesian quotations, and facility for reading and consulting the text.

27

Working document

The text of the Constitutions and Regulations referred to by the *Outlines for study* is that following GC21; this is the one confreres and chapters will work on. Those responsible should point this out to the confreres, and (to be on the safe

side) supply them with a copy of all the modifications GC21 made to the Constitutions and Regulations.

The official text is that *in Italian*, and it is well to bear in mind that there are occasional discrepancies in some of the translations. Where Italian is not spoken (especially during the provincial chapters) there should be one or more well-qualified confreres appointed to keep a constant check on the Italian text and its translation, as well as all the proposals made in the course of the revision.

To understand, amplify or interpret the points presented in the *Outlines for study*, recourse should be had mainly to the documents of SGC and GC21.

The work of the provincial chapters

28

In the provincial chapters it would be well that the individual points of the *Outlines for study* be introduced by a suitable introductory summary so as to put each point in the proper context of the text of the Constitutions. This should be done by a well-qualified person belonging to the provincial technical commission.

The findings of the provincial chapter should be expressed in proposals and observations regarding the text of the Constitutions and Regulations. Only these will be dealt with by the Precapitular Commission (Reg. 101) and GC22. Any study contributions sent by provincial chapters will be kept as consultation material available for the GC22 capitulars.

The proposals and observations made by provincial chapters

a) must be voted on and carry also the reasons motivating them;

b) must be type-written on one side only of the forms supplied;

c) must be typed on the kind of form forwarded by

the Moderator to the provinces — i.e., A4 (21 cm × 29.7 cm) and according to the directions thereon;

d) must be forwarded to the Moderator in Italian (8 copies) and in the original language (1 copy). The latter is for possible comparison and for the archives. All copies sent must be authenticated with the seal of the province;

e) must be forwarded by 31 May 1983 at the very latest.

29

Confreres' contributions

Individual confreres may make their own contributions to the common study and revision of the Constitutions and Regulations; they should send their suggestions (as a first preference) to the provincial chapters; but they have the right to forward all their observations directly to the Moderator of GC22, making use of the appropriate forms supplied.

In sending their suggestions and observations to the Moderator of GC22, confreres should observe the following directions:

a) proposals must be signed;

b) proposals must be written on the appropriate forms provided by the moderator of the provincial chapter (A5, i.e., 21 cm × 14.85 cm);

c) proposals must be written on one side of the form only;

d) every form must contain one proposal only.

The way confreres fill in the forms and forward proposals to the provincial chapters could be the same as indicated above.

4. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

4.1 General directions re the Survey Questionnaire on the Constitutions and Regulations.

Who answers the questionnaire and why

- The questionnaire is for the members of the provincial chapters. Its purpose is to obtain a numerical assessment of the reactions and judgements arrived at in the provincial chapters on certain points.

- What is sought is an *overall assessment* on the matters raised by the various questions; since the provincial chapter will already have given its judgement on the *details* in the proposals it voted for during its various sessions.

Preamble to answering the questionnaire

- The questionnaire presumes that the provincial chapters (and before them the local communities and each individual confrere) will all have thought carefully over the text of the Constitutions and Regulations, and in particular will have made good use of the *Outlines for study* and the *Criteria for the revision of the Constitutions and Regulations*.

- The questionnaire should be completed towards the end of the provincial chapter as indicated below. At the beginning of the chapter, however, the moderator could brief the capitulars on the matters raised in the questionnaire.

How to complete the questionnaire.

- When the Constitutions and Regulations have been discussed, before the chapter closes, each capitular shall receive a numbered copy of the questionnaire with the provincial seal thereon.

- The moderator shall remind the capitulars:

- that on each point they are asked to express an *overall* assessment as arrived at after study and discussion;

- that their replies will be totalled up so as to arrive at a numerical expression of the reaction of the chapter to each point;

- that they should answer all questions with *yes*, *no*, or *abstention*.

N.B. — The *abstention column* has been put in for those who consider they cannot express a conclusive opinion on any particular point. To facilitate the vote-counting these *abstentions* should also be recorded.

- The capitulars shall mark an X in the box that best expresses their own overall impression regarding the matter at issue.

- Duly appointed scrutineers shall supervise the collection of the questionnaires, which should not be signed.

Collecting and counting the answers

- After collecting the questionnaires the scrutineers shall proceed with the public counting.

- The total number of *yeses*, *noes* and *abstentions* for each question on the mastersheet should correspond to the number of capitulars who filled in the questionnaire.

- After the totals have been entered on the mastersheet, the capitulars' questionnaires should be kept among the Acts of the provincial chapter.

Forwarding the mastersheet to the GC22 Moderator

- The mastersheet of results shall be signed by the moderator and the scrutineers of the Survey Questionnaire.
- The mastersheet shall be sent in triplicate to the GC22 Moderator together with the other documents (v. *Calendar for GC22*).

4.2 Survey Questionnaire to be answered

1. Literary style

- 1.1 Are the Constitutions written in comprehensible language? yes no abst.
☐ ☐ ☐
- 1.2 Does the use of the indicative carry conviction? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 1.3 Occasionally the Constitutions use the plural ("we Salesians") when referring to commitments, witness, etc. Does there seem to be general agreement regarding this mode of expression? ☐ ☐ ☐

2. The order of the text

- 2.1 Are the parts of the text (I Apostolic mission, II Community life, III Consecration, etc.) set in satisfactory order? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 2.2 Is the order of the chapters (within the parts) satisfactory?
 Please judge each part separately:
- 2.2.1 the chapters of the first part? . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 2.2.2 the chapters of the second part? . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 2.2.3 the chapters of the third part? . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 2.2.4 the chapters of the fourth part? . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 2.2.5 the chapters of the fifth part? . . ☐ ☐ ☐

3. *Each chapter*

3.1 Do you consider that the matter in each chapter is treated completely enough?

Please judge each chapter separately:

		yes	no	abst.
I	The Salesians of Don Bosco in the Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
III	The service our mission entails . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
III	Those for whom we work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV	Our activities and works	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
V	Joint responsibility for the mission .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VI	The Salesian spirit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VII	The fraternal and apostolic community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIII	The community at prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IX	The Salesian's religious consecration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
X	Our chastity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XI	Our poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XII	Our obedience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XIII	General aspects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XIV	Stage of formation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XV	Our fidelity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XVI	General principles and criteria . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XVII	Structures of government at world and regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XVIII	Structures of government at provincial level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XIX	Structures of government at local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XX	Administration of temporal goods .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. *Salesian apostolate*

4.1 Do the Constitutions express with sufficient clarity the content of the Salesian apostolate (evangelisation, catechesis, education, human development)?

☐ ☐ ☐

4.2 Do the Constitutions clarify sufficiently the varying importance of the elements of the Salesian apostolate?

☐ ☐ ☐

- 4.3 Do the Constitutions clarify sufficiently the specific mission of the Salesian Congregation? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ abst.

5. *Salesian style of life*

- 5.1 Is the Constitutions' delineation of the Salesian way of living and working substantially complete? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 5.2 Do the Constitutions contain sufficient references to the thought and writings of the Founder? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 5.3 Certain modifications were made to suit conciliar prescriptions: is there an overall harmony between these modifications and Salesian tradition? ☐ ☐ ☐

6. *Our charges*

- 6.1 Do the Constitutions indicate our charges in a substantially complete manner? . . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 6.2 Do the Constitutions clearly indicate our priorities in the choice of our charges? . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 6.3 Are the Constitutions sufficiently clear in indicating practical options regarding our charges? ☐ ☐ ☐

7. *Authority*

- 7.1 Do the present Constitutions treat authority substantially in line with the spirit and thought of Don Bosco? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 7.2 Do the present Constitutions treat authority substantially in line with the changed requirements and sensitivities of our religious life? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 7.3 Do the Constitutions delineate and distribute the duties and competencies of the various

- community offices so that there is complete clarity regarding the exercise of each authority? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ abst.
- 7.4 Do the Constitutions furnish those with authority in community with sufficiently clear indications of their duties and competencies for the exercise of their authority?
- 7.4.1 at local community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 7.4.2 at provincial community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
8. *Co-responsibility and subsidiarity*
- 8.1 Do the Constitutions describe the principle of co-responsibility with sufficient clarity? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.2 Are the practical directions regarding co-responsibility sufficient to encourage its practice
- 8.2.1 at local community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.2.2 at provincial community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.3 Do the Constitutions describe the principle of subsidiarity with sufficient clarity? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.4 Are the practical directions regarding subsidiarity sufficient to encourage its practice
- 8.4.1 at local community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.4.2 at provincial community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
9. *Community*
- 9.1 Do the Constitutions describe with sufficient clarity the Salesian community as
- 9.1.1 a religious community? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 9.1.2 a brotherly community? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 9.1.3 an apostolic community? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 9.2 Do the Constitutions provide directions that are practical enough and adequate for guiding the community in its
- 9.2.1 religious life? ☐ ☐ ☐

- | | yes | no | abst. |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 9.2.2 brotherly life? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9.2.3 apostolic life? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. *General assessments*

- 10.1 Have the renewed Constitutions sufficiently absorbed the evangelical and theological principles regarding the religious life? . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 10.2 Do the renewed Constitutions contain in substance the inalienable heritage of the Salesian Congregation? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 10.3 Do the Constitutions clearly express the juridical norms for defining the Congregation's character, its end and the means it uses? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 10.4 Do the Constitutions display a satisfactory concordance between the spiritual and normative elements? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 10.5 Does the distribution of material in the Constitutions and Regulations correspond in substance to the different natures of the two texts? ☐ ☐ ☐

11. *The General Regulations*

Do the General Regulations provide the necessary universal applications for the practical implementation of the Constitutions regarding

- 11.1 Salesian pastoral action (First Part)? . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 11.2 Religious life (Second Part)? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 11.3 Formation (Third Part)? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 11.4 Organisation of the Society (Fourth Part)? ☐ ☐ ☐

survey questionnaire



22nd GENERAL CHAPTER

4. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

4.1 General directions re the Survey Questionnaire on the Constitutions and Regulations.

Who answers the questionnaire and why

- The questionnaire is for the members of the provincial chapters. Its purpose is to obtain a numerical assessment of the reactions and judgements arrived at in the provincial chapters on certain points.
- What is sought is an *overall assessment* on the matters raised by the various questions; since the provincial chapter will already have given its judgement on the *details* in the proposals it voted for during its various sessions.

Preamble to answering the questionnaire

- The questionnaire presumes that the provincial chapters (and before them the local communities and each individual confrere) will all have thought carefully over the text of the Constitutions and Regulations, and in particular will have made good use of the *Outlines for study* and the *Criteria for the revision of the Constitutions and Regulations*.
- The questionnaire should be completed towards the end of the provincial chapter as indicated below. At the beginning of the chapter, however, the moderator could brief the capitulars on the matters raised in the questionnaire.

How to complete the questionnaire.

• When the Constitutions and Regulations have been discussed, before the chapter closes, each capitular shall receive a numbered copy of the questionnaire with the provincial seal thereon.

• The moderator shall remind the capitulars:

— that on each point they are asked to express an *overall* assessment as arrived at after study and discussion;

— that their replies will be totalled up so as to arrive at a numerical expression of the reaction of the chapter to each point;

— that they should answer all questions with *yes*, *no*, or *abstention*.

N.B. — The *abstention column* has been put in for those who consider they cannot express a conclusive opinion on any particular point. To facilitate the vote-counting these *abstentions* should also be recorded.

• The capitulars shall mark an X in the box that best expresses their own overall impression regarding the matter at issue.

• Duly appointed scrutineers shall supervise the collection of the questionnaires, which should not be signed.

Collecting and counting the answers

• After collecting the questionnaires the scrutineers shall proceed with the public counting.

• The total number of *yeses*, *noes* and *abstentions* for each question on the mastersheet should correspond to the number of capitulars who filled in the questionnaire.

• After the totals have been entered on the mastersheet, the capitulars' questionnaires should be kept among the Acts of the provincial chapter.

Forwarding the mastersheet to the GC22 Moderator

- The mastersheet of results shall be signed by the moderator and the scrutineers of the Survey Questionnaire.

- The mastersheet shall be sent in triplicate to the GC22 Moderator together with the other documents (v. *Calendar for GC22*).

4.2 Survey Questionnaire to be answered

1. Literary style

- 1.1 Are the Constitutions written in comprehensible language?

yes	no	abat.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- 1.2 Does the use of the indicative carry conviction?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------
- 1.3 Occasionally the Constitutions use the plural ("we Salesians") when referring to commitments, witness, etc. Does there seem to be general agreement regarding this mode of expression?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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2. The order of the text

- 2.1 Are the parts of the text (I Apostolic mission, II Community life, III Consecration, etc.) set in satisfactory order?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- 2.2 Is the order of the chapters (within the parts) satisfactory?
Please judge each part separately:
- 2.2.1 the chapters of the first part? . .

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------
- 2.2.2 the chapters of the second part? . .

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------
- 2.2.3 the chapters of the third part? . .

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------
- 2.2.4 the chapters of the fourth part? . .

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------
- 2.2.5 the chapters of the fifth part? . .

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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3. *Each chapter*

3.1 Do you consider that the matter in each chapter is treated completely enough?

Please judge each chapter separately:

		yes	no	abst.
I	The Salesians of Don Bosco in the Church	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
III	The service our mission entails . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
III	Those for whom we work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV	Our activities and works	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
V	Joint responsibility for the mission .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VI	The Salesian spirit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VII	The fraternal and apostolic community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VIII	The community at prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IX	The Salesian's religious consecration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
X	Our chastity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XI	Our poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XII	Our obedience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XIII	General aspects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XIV	Stage of formation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XV	Our fidelity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XVI	General principles and criteria . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XVII	Structures of government at world and regional level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XVIII	Structures of government at provincial level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XIX	Structures of government at local level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XX	Administration of temporal goods .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. *Salesian apostolate*

4.1 Do the Constitutions express with sufficient clarity the content of the Salesian apostolate (evangelisation, catechesis, education, human development)?

☐ ☐ ☐

4.2 Do the Constitutions clarify sufficiently the varying importance of the elements of the Salesian apostolate?

☐ ☐ ☐

- 4.3 Do the Constitutions clarify sufficiently the specific mission of the Salesian Congregation? ☐ ☐ ☐

yes no abst.

5. *Salesian style of life*

- 5.1 Is the Constitutions' delineation of the Salesian way of living and working substantially complete? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 5.2 Do the Constitutions contain sufficient references to the thought and writings of the Founder? ☐ ☐ ☐
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6. *Our charges*

- 6.1 Do the Constitutions indicate our charges in a substantially complete manner? . . . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 6.2 Do the Constitutions clearly indicate our priorities in the choice of our charges? . ☐ ☐ ☐
- 6.3 Are the Constitutions sufficiently clear in indicating practical options regarding our charges? ☐ ☐ ☐

7. *Authority*

- 7.1 Do the present Constitutions treat authority substantially in line with the spirit and thought of Don Bosco? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 7.2 Do the present Constitutions treat authority substantially in line with the changed requirements and sensitivities of our religious life? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 7.3 Do the Constitutions delineate and distribute the duties and competencies of the various

- community offices so that there is complete clarity regarding the exercise of each authority? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ abst.
- 7.4 Do the Constitutions furnish those with authority in community with sufficiently clear indications of their duties and competencies for the exercise of their authority?
- 7.4.1 at local community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 7.4.2 at provincial community level? ☐ ☐ ☐

8. *Co-responsibility and subsidiarity*

- 8.1 Do the Constitutions describe the principle of co-responsibility with sufficient clarity? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.2 Are the practical directions regarding co-responsibility sufficient to encourage its practice
- 8.2.1 at local community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.2.2 at provincial community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.3 Do the Constitutions describe the principle of subsidiarity with sufficient clarity? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.4 Are the practical directions regarding subsidiarity sufficient to encourage its practice
- 8.4.1 at local community level? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 8.4.2 at provincial community level? ☐ ☐ ☐

9. *Community*

- 9.1 Do the Constitutions describe with sufficient clarity the Salesian community as
- 9.1.1 a religious community? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 9.1.2 a brotherly community? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 9.1.3 an apostolic community? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 9.2 Do the Constitutions provide directions that are practical enough and adequate for guiding the community in its
- 9.2.1 religious life? ☐ ☐ ☐

	yes	no	abt.
9.2.2 brotherly life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.2.3 apostolic life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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- 11.2 Religious life (Second Part)? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 11.3 Formation (Third Part)? ☐ ☐ ☐
- 11.4 Organisation of the Society (Fourth Part)? ☐ ☐ ☐