



Behold, I will do something new!
Now it springs forth; will you not be aware of it?
(Is 43:19)

Preparing the XVIII General Chapter

Issue n. 02 (October 2022)

Method

This preparation aid is intended for our local communities. After personal reflection, we respond together to the proposed questions and report them in writing by sending them, by November 15, to one of the coordinators or to the secretary of the Preparatory Committee, with a copy to the Circumscriptions Superiors. We suggest limiting the length of responses to two pages or less.

If someone, personally, would like to propose more articulated reflections and share them with all, he can send them to the General Direction with the possibility that they are shared through the website.

Questions

1. Missionary Animation

What are the weaknesses and strengths of our efforts in Missionary Animation? Achievements, successes, obstacles, mistakes...

2. Vocations Ministry

Thinking about the current reality: what are the significant elements for an effective vocation ministry? What are the gaps and the major challenges?

3. Missionary parish

What are the concrete elements that confirm the missionary identity of our parishes? Concretely, what prominence do we give to AMeV in our parish pastoral plans?

Is there room for the birthing and development of the *Xaverian Charismatic Family* in our parishes? How?

4. Digital world (Web)

How is the Xaverian presence being implemented in the digital universe in your Circumscription? What feedback do we perceive in our missionary activity? How do we get everybody on-board?

(Edited by the Preparatory Committee for the 18th General Chapter)

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Where we are

Missionary and Vocation Animation, Missionary parishes and the digital world (Web)

Objective

Analyze the current situation concerning missionary animation, commitment to vocation ministry, our parishes' missionary and Xaverian style, and the quality of Xaverian presence in the digital world (Web)

2. Nowadays, the Lord continues to call people to follow him. The joy of having been found by the love of God should prompt every Xaverian - even as a community - to engage with others so that they may find their vocation in the joy of the Gospel (cf. RMX 82.2, 85.1-2).

Xaverian inspirational text

1. "Missionary Animation aims at promoting growth in the awareness of the Church's missionary identity. We Xaverians undertake Missionary Animation as a qualified service of collaboration with the local Church with the purpose of animating its missionary vitality in its members, communities, and institutions, opening its horizons to the wider world and those who do not know the Gospel" (RMX 82.1).

3. The many Christian communities entrusted to us and other forms of missionary presence represent a significant part of the *harvest* the Lord places in our hands so that He can be known, loved, and followed. The style and sensitivity proper to the Xaverian charism are important elements in making these communities truly missionary (cf. *The vocation to which we have been called could not be greater or more noble*. Letter from the General Direction for the Xaverian Jubilee year, 2020-2021, no. 65).



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4. The digital world (Web) is a new continent to be inhabited, with its own language, new tools, new logic, and new dynamics. The Xaverians, by virtue of the mission received that sends them *to all*, will also be present in this new and immense digital *aeropaes* (cf. iQUADERNI de iSaveriani 116, *Xaverian Charism and social media. Principles and guidelines for the use of social media*, p. 8).

Presentation

Missionary Animation and Vocation Ministry (AMeV), accountability to the Christian communities entrusted to us, and involvement in the *Web world* are significant dimensions of our being missionaries even today. The first area (AMeV), is enhanced by reflections and experiences that, as Xaverians, we have been carrying on for decades. The second, the missionary parish, has become a motif for assessment, especially recently. Finally, the issue of the digital world is engaging more and more confres (and time), aware that it is a crucial reality for proclamation and mission. Currently, most of our personnel and energies are focused on these areas. This, due to the significant changes taking place also in our Institute,

should lead us to make some choices at the local and congregational levels.

In the *Ratio Missionis Xaveriana*, we read: "**Missionary Animation and Vocation Animation** are two different sides of the same reality and, therefore, they should be kept together. Any activity we engage in must present the Gospel message in a personalized way, aiming to arouse a possible response in the listener according to his potentials" (RMX 82).

The parishes entrusted to us are '*a Xaverian work*.' They are an opportunity to enable awareness and missionary activities *ad gentes* to grow in the people of God. According to Conforti spirituality, we are called to form Christian missionary communities. Communities that generate disciples of Christ: "it is a question of knowing how to pass on to these communities the gift we have received from the Lord through the charism of Msgr. Conforti. Concretely: the passion for the Kingdom of God expressed in the proclamation of the Gospel to those who do not know it, outside of one's own culture and church of origin; a preferential love for the poorest; an openness to the other (inter-religious dialogue) ..." (*Letter of the DG 2020-2021*, no. 65).

The reality of the digital world is a place to be inhabited first and foremost. It requires an active and qualified presence to serve the proclamation of the Gospel through our missionary identity (cf. RFX 196-198). At the same time, it is one of the valuable tools that sustains and renews the commitment in the field of AMeV. "The strengthening of the Xaverian net (Web) ought to produce also positive results for the confres dedicated to AMeV activities. ... This pandemic has seen an increase of initiatives on the Web ... The digital world is certainly an opportunity to continue to carry out our AMeV work through new means and modalities" (*Cosuma Inter-capitalar 2021*, p. 39). It is a matter of understanding and assessing to what extent, as Xaverians, we are living/assuming this new mode of *missionary presence*, including what concerns AMeV. As "leaders" or as "mere beneficiaries - consumers"?

These areas are still *key building blocks* for the carrying out of our charism so that local Christian communities "acknowledge and embrace their responsibility for the mission to non-Christians" (C 15).

Today, AMeV, missionary parishes, and

the Xaverian presence on the Web must be carried out not in a self-referential ('private') way but in a synodal way, that is, involving the whole *Xaverian Charismatic Family*: *religious, laity, missionary families*, ... (a topic that will be addressed soon). This way strengthens the awareness that the spiritual gift of Conforti is for all Christians and that there are various ways (*vocations*) of living and enfleshing the *Xaverian spirituality*. It is time to put into practice this *new* vision of seeing mission, as the Spirit indicates.¹

¹ The expression "**Charismatic family**", used by Pope Francis in 2014, on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life, has now also become part of our Xaverian language. See *Letter GD 2020-2021*, n. 69-72.