

Loving our Xaverian vocation

*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. 04 (December 2022)

Where are we?

***The Xaverian's humanity. Interculturality.
Basic and ongoing formation***

*Formation, as a very important reality of our Family,
sustains the process of a new beginning
".... towards the 'today', the 'where' and the 'how' of God
that keeps us engaged in this world and in this Church".*

RFX 2014, p. viii

Objective

Reflect on the human face of the Xaverian, on the reality of interculturality and on the formation processes under way in our Congregation, in order to learn to be, in the mission ad gentes, ad extra and ad vitam, living and credible signs of the passion for God and for humanity.

Inspiring Texts

"The confreres: they are the most beautiful gift that the Lord gives us. It is not us to choose one another, it is He who brings us together and makes us become a body to witness to the new life according to the Spirit, each one in its particularity, in its cultural, linguistic, characteristic specificity... What unites us and makes us brothers is precisely the fact of being disciples of the Lord in the particular Xaverian vocation. The name 'Xaverian' is not an ac-



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cident along the way..., but an identity that we share, the one that God has wanted for each one of us. (cf. C 37; Letter GD 2020. n. 30).

In this perspective, *"Intercultural living is an intentional and explicitly faith – based undertaking. It is therefore radically different from simply being a member of an intercultural community and living under the same roof as others, including people of diverse culture"*. (Antony J. Gittins)

*"The Lord provides for the continuity of our family by **giving us new brothers**. We welcome them with joy and gratitude and we pledge to share with them, by word and example, the experience of the Spirit we have received from the Founder"*. (C 52)

Basic and ongoing formation are never separable: they constitute a single organic process of life consecrated to the mission. Apostolic work and community life are privileged places, the source and stimulus of our ongoing formation.

The ongoing formation (OF) sustains and decides the quality of the renewal of the Congregation and the very vitality of the charism, in harmony with history and with the mysterious but truly active action of the Spirit. The new contexts, the transformations taking place in each field and the new challen-

ges of the mission, demand special attention to the OF at a personal, regional and Congregation level. (Cf. RMX 89; Vademecum 2015, SF 17).

Presentation

The quality of **the Xaverian's humanity** is the first foundation of his spiritual and apostolic life (Cf. C 58): The Xaverian is called to gradually attain the rich and balanced humanity of which Bishop Conforti speaks (Cf. C 4). Unfortunately, many times there is a lack of will to work on one's own person in order to overcome and manage our shortcomings. A life not reconciled with one's own person and the vocation received, negatively influence **inter-personal relationships**. This is the cause of many of the difficulties in community life, in acceptance and fraternal collaboration; for example, in preparing and carrying out an apostolic project together.

Many times, we act more by instinct than by faith. We must not forget that there is no spirituality that can be sustained if it does not have as its foundation a healthy, balanced and cared for humanity. Therefore, if we do not solve these situations, we risk disfiguring the beauty of the human face of the Xaverian by contradicting the content of the message we carry. (Cf. Letter GD 2020. n. 38-39). As Fr. Francesco Marini, sx used to say: *"Either faith (mis-*

sionary vocation) makes us more human or it's not worth it".

The Xaverian Family composed of confreres of various nationalities was already a wish of the Founder. **Interculturality**, as an expression of the "face of God", involves us all (XVII GC 39). On the other hand, interculturality is sometimes not lived as a wealth and source of witness before a world that fatigues to accept otherness (Cf. Letter GD 2020, n. 60). On some occasions "self-referentiality", intolerance, the spirit of independence, the use of cultural categories, the weakness of love for the other are used as a shield to protect one's own individualism and immaturity (Cf. XVII GC 30).

*"The future of our missionary family depends, in large part, on the attention with which we devote ourselves to the not easy task of **encouraging and accompanying young people** who are attracted by our charism" (Cf. XVII GC n. 44).* Therefore, a good process of discernment before admission to the Xaverian community is vital. As for the human, spiritual and Xaverian formative process, it is essential to follow our formative documents. **Regarding International Theology**, in the line of repositioning, the XVII GC asked the GD to make *"a discernment on the possible reduction of the number of theologies for their greater qualification, thus en-*

suring adequate resources and a greater quality and internationality of the formation teams" (XVII GC n. 52 a) Has this request of the XVIII GC been assumed by the GD? Therefore, we ask where this process is taking us.

Ongoing Formation (OF) is an indispensable instrument in the life of every Xaverian: a) to guard and develop the gift of one's vocation; b) for effectiveness in his ministry and missionary activity; c) to keep alive and up to date, in a fruitful and creative way, our charism. In this way, OF is not limited to the functional aspect of the missionary's "doing" (aggiornamento) but includes the whole "being" of the apostle.

It is necessary to overcome the dichotomy between basic and OF formation and to be aware, moreover, that in the epochal change we are experiencing, the goal of a "complete formation" for the mission is practically unattainable. As a Congregation, it is very important to follow up on the accompaniment of the confreres in their first years of missionary ministry, to take up again the proposal of the "Tremesi", to strengthen the Centers for Continental Studies and to hold the Congress on the Human Face of the Xaverian. (Cf. Ongoing Formation Committee. Final Message. Tavernerio, 4-8 September 2018)

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Method

Personally study this topic. Then, respond communally to each of the questions. Subsequently, send the community responses to the Regional and to the coordinators of the *Preparatory Committee*.¹ Deliver the material no later than **January 15, 2023**.

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Questions

1. On the human face of the Xaverian: what riches and what poverty do we observe? What paths must we take to convert our humanity?
2. What are the greatest formative challenges today and how are we facing them?
3. What is the real challenge of interculturality and how can we grow in this dimension?
4. Is there a OF program in your Circumscription? At the Congregational level: what do you suggest strengthening this aspect of our missionary life?

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