

CHRONICLE OF THE XI GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE CROSS

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At the Center for Research and Teresian Spirituality in Mexico City members from different realities and cultures came together. As Apostles of the Cross we journey toward Jesus the crucified, merciful and faithful priest. Why? Not, to be clear, because of the strenuous work and long hours of meetings, but for our four blocks of work that lead us to Him: 1) To understand the journey traveled by the Apostleship of the Cross to become regions as well as the history and reality of each region; 2) To approve the amendments to the Statutes and propose appropriate modifications to these texts; 3) To deepen the first essential element of identity: experience of God; 4) Give general suggestions to consider for the XII General Assembly of 2017. Neither late to eat, or slothful after the due siesta time for those that were able, we formally initiated the meeting when Fr. Fernando Torre, MSpS gave an opening address and declared open the work of this XI Assembly.

Father Fernando presided over the Assembly and Fr. Vicente Monroy, MSpS coordinated the icebreaker. The Assembly was composed of 36 voting members, 4 guests and an assistant secretary. As you can imagine we had to come to an agreement on practical things like the schedule, Regulation, responsibilities, etc. in order to proceed smoothly.

With the way paved, block 1 began with the presentation by the Director General on "Regions of the Apostleship of the Cross. The journey traveled before and after 2009."

It was an excellent summary of the key events that have led to what the Assembly is now tasked to define. The X General Assembly of August 2009 confirmed the current organization of Regions, renovated the configuration of the Central Council and renewed the Statutes elaborated by the Central Council to reflect "the new structure of the relationship AC - MSpS and organization of the AC Regions." No doubt that this journey has been intense, newfangled, difficult, sometimes dark and as many participants noted, only possible through the guidance of the Spirit.

As the discussion turned to finances, General Director Fr. Fernando presented his report. He spoke about the process required to renew the Statutes, and the different activities and expenditures of the Central Council and concluded with the financial budget for 2014. After a recess, we continued with the reports of the various regions, beginning with Christ the Priest Region. Of course we also had time for the Eucharist on this second Friday of Lent and we dined on a delicious chard lasagna, beans and salad. As if that were not enough, some still made time for some extra meetings while others tried to sleep for a few additional minutes.

During part of the morning the Province of Mexico Region, the Félix de Jesús Region and Conchita Region presented their reports. This first block was concluded by expressing how these reports resonated with those who heard them. I believe it can be summarized thus: we find that the process started in 2005 is of God as evidenced by the fruits, life and fecundity observed and has been a journey

guided by the Spirit. We affirm unity (for example, in the elements that give us identity and the joint work of the laity-MSpS) and diversity (different avenues are conducive to creativity). We acknowledge the invitation to work on the formation of agents and that the Work faces the world. We neglected to mention what we do for vocations and the work being realized for this mission.

At approximately noon we began the long-awaited second block of work and perhaps most feared. It consisted in voting on the amendments to the Statutes. The responsibility was great, because it was the last step in the process of renewal of the Statutes of the Work that started years ago. Morning and afternoon went by and we finished voting on the amendments. Only a few still need to be defined. As expected, some amendments did not require much time, but for others the presentation of the reasons for or against the amendment were prolonged. These dialogues aimed to shed light on what is for the good of the Work. I think that everyone present, in one way or another, learned from these discussions.

"Come Creator Spirit..." were the words with which we began our day together on Sunday while gathered in the chapel. In addition to the recited prayers, we had time for meditation and we concluded listening to a song by Fr Marcos Alba, MSpS.

At about ten o'clock we finished the work on the Statutes. At that moment Fr. Vicente Monroy, MSpS asked all those present to applaud the Holy Spirit for guiding this process, everyone involved in the development of the document and the Assembly for their participation.

That same morning we started block 3, "Experience of God", which took the rest of

the day. The issue was approached in a very interesting and enriching way. It was not study or speculation. It was about speaking from our own experiences aided by some questions. Meetings by Region, then by heterogeneous groups and Regions were again very enlightening to convey ideas of the tools necessary to provide the apostles of the cross. It was a block that injected life and dynamism to all present.

On Monday during breakfast we thanked the Teresian Sisters for their generous care and for the tasty food that they prepared for us.

Block 4 consisted of different aspects:

-The revision by the Assembly of the draft of the message we want to send to the entire Apostleship of the Cross.

-The evaluation of this Assembly. First personally and in writing, then in heterogeneous groups where we discussed the prevailing sentiment, the central idea, and/or the invitation that this event left us with.

- We gathered once again in the meeting room to hear the message that our Director General prepared for all of us. He declared the work of the XI General Assembly concluded and an ovation of gratitude and satisfaction arose spontaneously in all of us.

We actually concluded the Assembly with the Eucharist presided by Fr. Vicente Monroy, MSpS. In the Gospel Jesus invited us to be merciful as our Heavenly Father is merciful, a further confirmation of our motto. Then we began to disperse. Some left immediately after Mass but most left after lunch. Can you guess what the Central Council did? They still had one more meeting. We surmise that they spoke about the tasks delegated to them by the Assembly and how to implement them.

