



2024 – August (No. 4)



The 36th General Chapter 2024 at ISTC, Wa
Chapter delegates, moderator, translator, and supporting staff
(August, 2024, Ghana)

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Herewith we present to you the fourth issue of IGC in 2024, which will inform you about the following:

- ❖ **A Synodal Church in Mission (Part III)**
- ❖ **Report General Chapter 2024, Wa, Ghana**
- ❖ **In memoriam**
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A Synodal Church in Mission (Part III)



“The consecrated life, deeply rooted in the example and teaching of Christ the Lord, is a gift of God the Father to his Church through the Holy Spirit. By the profession of the evangelical counsels *the characteristic features of Jesus* - the chaste, poor and obedient one - *are made constantly 'visible' in the midst of the world* and the eyes of the faithful are directed towards the mystery of the Kingdom of God already at work in history, even as it awaits its full realization in heaven.” The aim of the consecrated life is “conformity to the Lord Jesus in *his total self-giving*,” so that every consecrated person is called to assume “his mind and his way of life,” his way of thinking and of acting, of being and of loving.



The direct reference to Christ and the intimate nature of a gift for the Church and the world, are elements that define the identity and scope of the consecrated life. In them the consecrated life finds itself, its point of departure, God and his love, and its point of arrival, the human community and its requirements. The consecrated life can be compared in some ways to a school, that every consecrated person is called to attend for his whole life. In fact, having the mind of the Son means to attend his school daily, to learn from him to have a heart that is meek and humble, courageous and passionate. It means allowing oneself to be educated by Christ, the eternal Word of the Father and, to be drawn to him, the heart and center of the world, choosing his same form of life.

The life of a consecrated person is therefore an *educational-formative* rise and fall that educates to the truth of life and forms it to the freedom of the gift of oneself, according to the model of the Easter of the Lord. Every moment of consecrated life forms part of this rise and fall, in its double educational and formative aspect. A consecrated person does in fact gradually learn to have the mind of the Son in him and to reveal it in *a life that is increasingly similar to his*, both at individual and community level, in initial and permanent formation. Thus the vows are an expression of the lifestyle chosen by Jesus on this earth that was essential, chaste and completely dedicated to the Father. Prayer becomes a continuation on earth of the praise of the Son to the Father for the salvation of all mankind. Community life is the demonstration that, in the name of the Lord, stronger bonds than those that come from flesh and blood can be tied. These are bonds that are able to overcome what can divide. The apostolate is the impassioned announcement of he by whom we have been conquered.

(Source: Consecrated Life and their Mission in Schools; Rome, 2002)

Report General Chapter 2024, Wa, Ghana

The opening of the 36th FIC General Chapter occurred on 4 August 2024 at the In-Service Training Centre (ISTC) chapel under the theme “Renewal of our Consecrated Life and Mission in the Spirit of Synodality”. The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by the newly ordained Bishop of Wa, Most Rev. Msgr. Francis Bomansaana, M. Afr, assisted by several priests of the Wa diocese. Many FIC brothers from nearby communities attended, including the Chapter delegates, religious from other congregations, and media personnel from the Department of Social Communications (DEPSOCOM), Wa.



In his welcome address at the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration, Bro. Seregeous Dery, the Provincial Superior of Ghana said the celebration was also in thanksgiving to God for the gift of our lives, our religious vocation, and for sustaining the FIC congregation through the joys and challenges of life over the past 184 years. He prayed for the Holy Spirit's intervention in the outcome of the Chapter for the greater glory of God and the benefit of humanity.

In the homily, Msgr. Francis recapped the importance of an encounter such as a general chapter in renewing every religious Congregation and their mission. To achieve such a renewal, religious need to have the courage to let go, move from their comfort zones, and be able to make decisions guided by the Holy Spirit. To ensure renewal is also to maintain our fidelity and perseverance in our way of life as religious for the sake of the Kingdom of God.



The Eucharistic celebration was immediately followed by a social gathering at ISTC, where the brothers and all invited guests were served food and drinks. At 20.00, the chapter delegates convened in the chapter hall for the official opening. First, we adopted the daily timetable and working schedule for the coming three weeks, after which we discussed some practical issues regarding our stay at ISTC. This paved the way for the official opening address of the Superior General, Bro. Augustine Kubdaar. The two-page address highlighted three points, namely the General Chapter's theme, structure and task. For the inspiration of the chapter delegates, he had the following to say:

“... in renewing our consecrated life and mission, we embrace synodality, as our Holy Father Pope Francis emphasized. He describes synodality as involving prayer, attentive listening, meaningful silence, and discernment. True transformation comes from opening ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Synodality invites us to value every voice and perspective, fostering an environment of genuine dialogue and communion where differences become growth opportunities. Through prayerful reflection and shared discernment, we aim to chart the future of our mission. This renewal is a collective endeavour, reflecting the essence of synodality, the need for transformation, (re)formation, and a shared commitment to walk forward with Christ and humanity.”



After this inspiring address, he declared the 36th General Chapter duly opened, with much trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of our Immaculate Mother. In the coming days, we went into real business, discussing the General Council report in the first week and processing over 20 proposals in the second week. This second week also engaged delegates in group discussions on the kind of General Council and the requirements or qualities brothers need to have to merit election into the next General Council team.

After this week, delegates needed time to refresh their tired minds. Therefore, taking a day out this weekend was more than welcome news. It was an exciting trip to Royal Cosy Hills, a four-star luxury safari resort in Jirapa, in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The attractions include wildlife such as zebras, lions, ostriches and an imposing artificial lake with lots of fish.



At the end of the two-hour tour, we settled in the resort restaurant for a delightful lunch and refreshing drinks. By 5 pm, we had returned home, feeling satisfied for having the opportunity to relax and prepare for the coming days.

The third week was laden with crucial decisions, but having relaxed at the weekend, we were refreshed and ready to face the task ahead. One significant duty was voting on the proposals, which had earlier been processed thoroughly. The other was finalising the General Chapter Message, a communication encapsulating the topical deliberations during the Chapter. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, delegates fulfilled one of the Chapter's cardinal duties stated in article 119 of our Constitutions – the election of a New General Council. The whole process was conducted in the context of a prayer service under the theme "*Election in the spirit of synodality*". The four Brothers legitimately elected as members of the new General Council are:

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|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. Br. Augustine Kubdaar, FIC | - | Superior General |
| 2. Br. Michael Sidharta, FIC | - | Vicar |
| 3. Br. Raphael Besigrinee, FIC | - | General Councilor |
| 4. Br. Augustinus Marjito FIC | - | General Councilor |



In this final week, some time was dedicated to discussing some topics teased out of the previous discussions, namely *Leadership workshop*, *FIC New Mission and vocation promotion*. This discussion led to a resolution, mandating the new GC to study the possibility of establishing a new FIC mission. A total of 21 resolutions and a recommendation were adopted to chart the course of the next six years.

The source of our energy during the Chapter was the prayer services at the beginning of each day and the Eucharistic celebration that concluded it. The creativity brought to bear on our liturgical celebrations was inspiring and reflected the international character of the Congregation. We also celebrated one another through birthdays, feast days, etc. Additionally, we had time to recreate together after each hard day's work. All these activities helped participants to relax without feeling overworked.

On 24 August, the Superior General-elect, Bro. Augustine Kubdaar delivered his closing address, after which he declared the Chapter officially concluded.

IN MEMORIAM



Brother Maarten Bouw

Maarten was born on October 10 in Gemert, in 1932. He made his first profession on August 15, 1957 and his final profession on August 15, 1962. He passed away on July 10, 2024 in Maastricht, the Netherlands.



Brother Isidore Aabeisie

Isidore was born on September 10 in Nandom (Danko), in 1957. He made his first profession on September 15, 1994 and his final profession on April 13, 2004. He passed away on August 22, 2024 in Wa, Ghana.

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS



August

- 5 Ignatius Dalimin (75) - Semarang-Wisma Bernardus
- 23 Raphael Besigrinee (60) - Maastricht-Emmaus
- 24 Alpitio Kog (65) - Nandom-Mt Sion Community
- 27 Basilide Dong (60) - Damongo

September

- 15 Andrew Makocho (65) - Limbe-Formation House
- 28 Paul Sabogu (60) - Maastricht-Emmaus

October

- 6 Alexis Beleire (75) - Sunyani
- 17 Gerard van Geel (85) - Maastricht-Bernardus
- 27 Trustful Mwachande (50) – Limbe-Mary View