



Società del Sacro Cuore
Casa Generalizia

Ref. N°: 23/03

February 3, 2023

General Chapter 2024 (GC #1)

Provincials and District Superiors and All RSCJ

Dear Sisters,

The General Council and I are happy to formally convoke the General Chapter of 2024. The General Chapter will take place from August 1-31, 2024 in Centro Ad Gentes in Nemi, Italy (a short distance outside of Rome). We invite you to participate actively in this significant event in the life of our global community, building on all the work and reflection the RSCJ and our companions in mission have done during the last six years.

Reflecting on our experience and our hope for the future, and after consultation with the provincials and the International Planning Commission (IPC), the General Council has chosen the theme for this Chapter

**COURAGE, CONFIDENCE, TRANSFORMATION
THROUGH THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT
Luke 4: 14**

A General Chapter is a significant moment in the ongoing life and discernment of the Society. It is a time to assess our congregation's journey in the light of our Constitutions. A General Chapter ensures and promotes both communion and vitality in the Society in view of our mission. It is an opportunity for mutual accountability, for "course correction" when necessary, setting a direction for our future, electing a new superior general, and nominating a new leadership team. We are grateful that Piluca Benavente MSOLA and Begoña Martínez will continue to work with us to prepare for and facilitate this Chapter of Discernment.

In many ways, our international community has been preparing for the General Chapter of 2024 since the day we finished the General Chapter of 2016. The calls of the last General Chapter have become embedded in our lives in an extraordinary way. Responding to these calls has created "something new" among us and for those with whom we live and serve. Our collective commitment to making these calls integral to our life and mission has strengthened our present and set the course for our future.

We have developed a new consciousness about the need **to cross frontiers**, not only geographically but even more importantly existentially in our hearts and minds

We have searched for new ways **to live in the radical style of Jesus** as sisters, with one another and with others...to be simpler, humbler, closer to God's people and their experience, to show the compassionate face of God and be at the service of life.

The busy-ness of our lives and the frenetic pace of our world has called us to deepen our interior life, **to create silence** amidst the noise, to listen for the heartbeat of God in ourselves and in everything around us.

We have taken seriously and lived concretely the call **to be and act as One Body**, to revitalize our unity and diversity as a community....in order to share, collaborate and be in solidarity among ourselves and with others.

Over the last six years, RSCJ and many of our companions in mission, have answered the invitation to participate in the discernment about how we will walk into the future together. The Society has strengthened its international bonds through cross-cultural conversations, group presentations and discussion on a variety of themes that are core to our life. We have engaged with each other and with our colleagues in a variety of processes culminating in the Special Chapter of 2021. Our discernment continued through our participation in the Special Chapter, in the International Planning process, and now in the preparation for this General Chapter. Truly this Chapter is the next step in our communal discernment process.

Each province will have a Provincial Chapter in the year preceding the General Chapter, which must be concluded by February 1, 2024, that is, six months before the General Chapter begins. Each province will organize its own way of having a Chapter and decides how it will connect with the "new provinces", with their region and with the apostolic priorities. Provinces, especially those that have early Chapters, will be invited to add an additional page to their submission with updated information if they choose. We have attached as *Annex A* questions for your provincial chapters and the format for reporting your reflections. In the near future we will send the criteria for having an Open Chapter and a general permission to any province that meets the criteria.

Over the next nineteen months the Preparation Commission, the International Planning Commission, and the General Council will work together to accompany the Society in the journey toward the Chapter. We have asked Ananda Amritmahal, Jola Olczyk, and Mónica Esquivel to serve on the Preparatory Commission and we are grateful that they have agreed. We anticipate naming some additional commissions and committees to work before and during the Chapter. The General Chapter of 2024 will be an intentional chapter of discernment; in preparation, the whole Society will be encouraged to participate in a spiritual



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journey rooted in our Constitutions. We also anticipate creating a community of discernment among the delegates before the Chapter begins.

The International Planning Commission (IPC) and the General Council will be working and walking with the current provinces and districts and the new provinces as we see together what way of interconnecting with each other will be most life-giving for our future. As part of our communal discernment, each person, each community and each province will be invited to re-read our experience in the light of our Constitutions, to look deeply at the movement of the Spirit to help us discern the call of God for us now and into the future. As the process unfolds, you may be asked for additional input along the way.

Let us go forward on the road that has brought us to where we are (Philippians 3:16) sure that Sophie and all the women who have walked before us are with us on this journey. During these next months, may we live with COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE, sure that in the power of the Spirit, TRANSFORMATION is happening.

Bansana mj. Anne rscj Daphne Marie-Jeanne Mónica rscj

Enclosures:

Annex A: How to prepare Chapter in provinces and districts

Annex B: Synthesis of the proceedings of the Assembly of Provincials 2022

Annex C: Decision about Delegates and Ex-Officio Members of the General Chapter