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NOUVELLES EN FAMILLE
NOTICIAS EN FAMILIA
NOTIZIE IN FAMIGLIA
FAMILY NEWS

News bulletin of the Congregation
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram

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SPECIAL GENERAL CHAPTER I

SAN BERNARDINO - PARAGUAY

6-26 MAY 2017

In union of prayer

O Virgin Mary, you welcomed with joy
the call to be the Mother of God and our Mother too.

You took the road without delay,
to bring the Good News to your cousin Elizabeth.

At Cana, you told your Son Jesus...
what people needed for the wedding feast to continue.

At the foot of the cross, you stood by Him,
taking your place, without complaint,
without begging to change your position...
sharing fully in the mission of your Son.

In the Upper Room, you prayed with all the disciples, for the Holy Spirit;
and they became courageous witnesses throughout the world.

In your motherly tenderness, look upon us your sons,
the Religious of Betharram, journeying to the General Chapter.

We wish to imitate and manifest in our community
the generous spirit of the Heart of Your Son.

Help us, religious and laity, to be eager and happy missionaries;
may we have the courage to respond to the challenges of today's world
through love, without delay, without reserve, without turning back.

AMEN.

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*Holy Spirit,
inspire me;
Love of God,
consume me.*

*Along the true
road lead me.*

Mary, my mother, look upon me.

With Jesus bless me.

*From all evil, from all illusion,
from all danger, preserve me.*



Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified



Societas S^{mi} Cordis Jesu
BETHARRAM

126
2017

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A WORD FROM THE FOUNDER

A simple question



Are we, who are members of a religious society, living well ?

We can answer yes if: We are living orderly lives; We are living in friendship with one another, as true members according to the society's rules; We are living humbly.

We can judge for ourselves if we are living orderly lives. Our fellow members must judge whether we are living in friendship as true members of the Society, and it is for God to judge if we are living humbly.

Living orderly lives, with a great zeal to fulfil all our duties ; each one of us according to the measure of the grace we have received and according to our position, before God and before

our neighbour, avoiding sin for ourselves and scandal for our neighbour.

Living in friendship as true members of the Society, making sure we do our utmost to be loved and also to love, showing ourselves to be kind and friendly ; in supporting our brothers' weaknesses, both spiritual and physical, not only patiently but also gladly.

Living humbly, in carrying out a duty after having done everything to dispel the spirit of vanity, which usually rises up within us in such instances, and to refuse to allow it to do so, however deeply we feel the sentiment.

So, in coping with our 3 kinds of problem, we take 3 measures : as we will have to suffer for ourselves and for our neighbour, as well as for God. For ourselves, we suffer the severity of penitence ; for our neighbour, the conflict which can give rise to ill-will within us ; for God, the scourge that he sends us to correct us.

Who is the suffering meant for, that we have caused ourselves ? We should regard it as a voluntary sacrifice ; as for those sufferings that our neighbour causes us, we have to bear them with patience. Those which God sends us, we have to withstand without grumbling and with actions of grace.

Saint Michael Garicoits

Extract from Manuscript 482

They embarked on 31 August 1856, and they arrived at their destination on 4 November.

The letter of obedience stipulated that they were "sent by the Bishop of Bayonne to the Diocese of Buenos Aires, to work there, following the aims of the Society, either with their Basque and Bearnese compatriots, or under the direction and obedience of the Bishop of the diocese and the Superior of the Society." But a hundred miles radius around the capital, was too small for men of the temper of Father Guimon... Beyond the lines defended by the military, lived indigenous Indians. Fathers Guimon, Larrouy and Harbustan met with dignitaries of the Pampas tribes. The third meeting would be the last one: hostile body language was in evidence, with threatening spears ... Father Harbustan wrote cryptically: "Unfortunately among us, not even in the venerable Fr. Guimon, was the thirst for martyrdom ardent enough to come to such an act of heroism "These missionaries, so generous, wanted to go further: to be "Apostolic Missionaries" (independent of the Bishops) and to settle in Montevideo. Michel Garicoits wrote his disagreement with the Superior of America: "The idea of the title of Apostolic Missionary was fought by me in the most energetic way when you left Betharram. "What use do you think that would be?" I said to Fr. Guimon. "It would only serve to antagonise the bishops everywhere" (...)



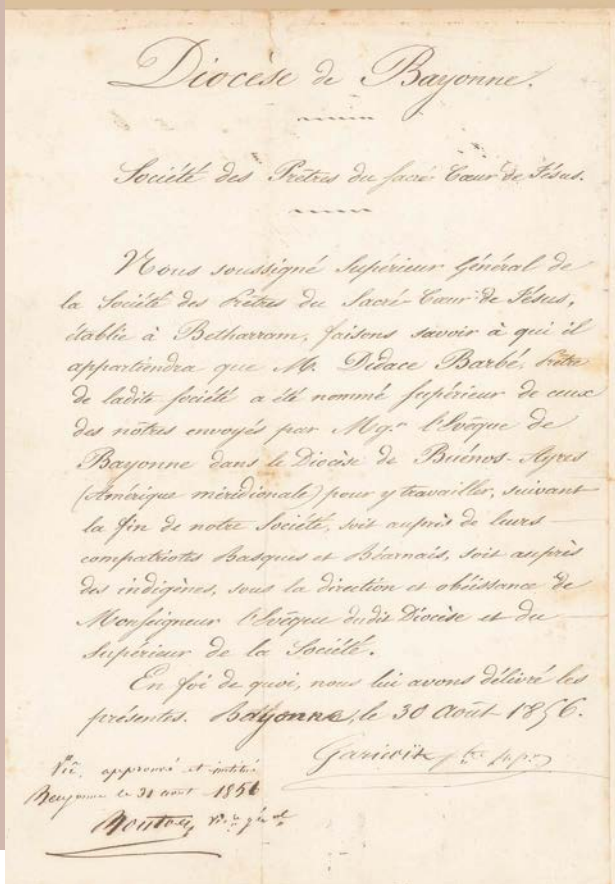
"I have already said that the request for a mission to the Indians seems to me quite inappropriate at present." "I cannot at present give you orders concerning Montevideo; we shall see later, when the position and designs of God become more clearly manifested. I would wish with all my heart to help our compatriots in Montevideo: but the moment has not come." Michael Garicoits knew how to be patient! After several missions in Uruguay, the Vicar Apostolic of this country invited the priests of the Sacred Heart to settle there. Michael Garicoits agreed.

But Father Guimon would not be a part of this journey. In Lent 1861 he was still preaching. On the 7th of April, one week after Easter, it was the last battle; Disease finally overtook him on May 22, 1861. Learning of his death, Michel Garicoits ordered the remains of his first companion of our foundation, his friend, to be brought back to Betharram. They have been in the Calvary cemetery since May 29, 1872.

Beñat Oyhénart sci

Mission statement

Bright future ahead



This document of the founder is a gem! Today it would be called "a Mission Statement". And it should be read very closely, even under a microscope!

- From the very first line, Michel Garicoits styles himself as "Superior General": he wanted a religious Congregation: he made known the appointment of Father Barbé; Even if "our people" are "sent by the Bishop of Bayonne", in his letter to the Bishop of Buenos Aires, he (the bishop of Bayonne) is not the one presenting them as members of a Society.

- Often it is said that Father Guimon and the others are sent to the Basque émigrés. A simple reading makes it possible to see that the "Béarnais" are mentioned there too!

- ...and we don't stop with "the Basques and Béarnais compatriots". Michel Garicoits does not forget the "natives": they are not émigrés...



San Bernardino, May 2017
Young sons* of Saint Michael at the General Chapter
together with a Jesuit,...
never mind... same family!

* yet some not quite in their prime

Michel Garicoits has a clear interest in what we call today "mission ad gentes".

- The group is "under the direction and obedience of Monsignor the Bishop of the said Diocese [of Buenos Aires] and the Superior of the Society": this is wholly "following the aims of our Society"!
- Was the letter, dated August 30th, written at Betharram? "Betharram" was scratched and replaced by "Bayonne": the original word remains legible under the correction! Why?
- On 31st August the Superior is at Bayonne at the moment of departure. There, M. Boutoey, Vicar General, attests that it is indeed the diocese that sends these missionaries: he countersigns the letter of the Superior General ...



Star of the new evangelization

Mary is the woman of faith, who lives and advances in faith, and "her exceptional pilgrimage of faith represents a constant point of reference for the Church". Mary let herself be guided by the Holy Spirit on a journey of faith towards a destiny of service and fruitfulness. Today we look to her and ask her to help us proclaim the message of salvation to all and to enable new disciples to become evangelizers in turn. Along this journey of evangelization we will have our moments of aridity, darkness and even fatigue. Mary herself experienced these things during the years of Jesus' childhood in Nazareth: "This is the beginning of the Gospel, the joyful good news. However, it is not difficult to see in that beginning a particular heaviness of heart, linked with a sort of night of faith – to use the words of Saint John of the Cross – a kind of 'veil' through which one has to draw near to the Invisible One and to live in intimacy with the mystery. And this is the way that Mary, for many years, lived in intimacy with the mystery of her Son, and went forward in her pilgrimage of faith". There is a Marian "style" to the Church's work of evangelization. Whenever we look to Mary, we come to believe once again in the revolutionary nature of love and tenderness. [...]. Mary is able to recognize the traces of God's Spirit in events great and small. She constantly

contemplates the mystery of God in our world, in human history and in our daily lives. She is the woman of prayer and work in Nazareth, and she is also Our Lady of Help, who sets out from her town "with haste" (Lk 1:39) to be of service to others. This interplay of justice and tenderness, of contemplation and concern for others, is what makes the ecclesial community look to Mary as a model of evangelization. [...]

With Mary we advance confidently towards the fulfilment of this promise, and to her we pray:

Mary, Virgin and Mother, you who, moved by the Holy Spirit, welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith: as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One, help us to say our own "yes" to the urgent call, as pressing as ever, to proclaim the good news of Jesus. [...]

Give us a holy courage to seek new paths, that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman. [...]

Star of the new evangelization, help us to bear radiant witness to communion, service, ardent and generous faith, justice and love of the poor, that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth, illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Extracts from *Evangelii Gaudium*
287, 288

Heading to America

It is quite difficult to sum up the life of a person in a couple of pages! In the case of Father Simon Guimon, it is absolutely impossible. We came to know him better last January, during the first chapter of his life that took place in France. Let us go back to him now at a time when the small society of Betharram is at a turning point: the departure for America. Who knows whether, during his long journey on the *Etincelle*, gazing at the horizon, his ardent imagination made him conceive of a future general chapter of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Betharram, bringing together on the new continent, Betharramites of eleven different nationalities (among them four Basques only) ?

In 1841, Bishop of Bayonne for three years, Bishop Lacroix arrived at Betharram with a Rule for auxiliary priests.

With fervour Simon Guimon asked for religious vows; And thinking he had lost the battle, fell at the feet of the Bishop, swearing not to rise again till he should be heard. The silence was long, very long. The Bishop gave in and granted to the small group the vows and the rules chosen by Michel Garicoits.

Father Guimon had a fiery spirit, which drove him to eccentricities. He was blamed for some things, but each time he accepted and asked for forgiveness, often on his knees. He wasn't slow to answer back either. When Bishop Lacroix taunted him: "Father Guimon, Isaiah would have made an excellent missionary!" he fired back: "And an excellent bishop too! ""This devil of a Basque does not speak French; But he is eloquent!" Says Abbe Combalot, a Parisian preacher. Above all, he is full of mercy. The founder of the abbey of Belloc testifies: "A young squire had not confessed for a long time. He approached Father Guimon and the latter embraced him. Then, the confession finished, the nobleman said: "In my turn, I embrace you: you made me happy!" "Was Europe too small for this valiant missionary? He

was one of those who witnessed so many Basques and Bearnais going to South America, and wondered what becomes of their faith? Why not priests to accompany them? The ebullient Father Guimon first contacted Monsignor Lacroix and other priests before addressing his own Superior! Michael Garicoits convoked a "general congregation" (September 16, 1854). Before the vote, he made an "important observation": "Father Guimon did not behave according to the rules of religious obedience. Before he worked as he did, to procure personnel for America and to have this mission accepted by the Bishop, he should have spoken to the Superior of the community, to consult with him and to act under his direction. Despite this, the mission for the Diocese of Buenos Aires was accepted by 20 votes out of 21 (the other vote lost).

The preparations were long! The pioneer team was designated: Guimon was chosen of course; Didace Barbé, the teacher, was group leader; Larrouy was one of them; Harbustan and Sardoy, both from Barcus, entered Betharram for that purpose; The scholastic Jean Magendie accompanied them, as well as the brothers Fabien (from Pau) and Joannès (also from Barcus).

and successive sacrifices of every kind will end. What remains, and what will last is love for Our Lord and his Church.

Such is the feeling that sustains me. Never before have I felt the fear that seized me at my re-election. For a long time I had been chewing over the words of St. Augustine: "The higher the office, the greater the danger"; Additionally, because of my health among other reasons, I was afraid, thinking of this saying of Our Lord: "The shepherd must walk ahead of his sheep". (*Ante eas vadit*). But this feeling soon blended with that of trust, thinking first of all of the will of God, then of the excellence of that Congregation which God has founded and of which he is the Guide.

I have felt uplifted and upheld by your virtues and your merits, by the spirit

of the Holy Founder with which you are more and more infused ... and I know that you will obtain for me the fulfilment of that great ambition of those who are in leadership: namely to give their life for their sheep; (*Dat animam suam pro ovibus*) Yes this soul such as it is, in spite of its feebleness, faults and failings of all kinds, following the one true shepherd, will give itself and will always give itself; I will give myself to all; I give myself without delay; I will strive every day to give myself without complaining. May I give myself unreservedly, as I long to give myself without return for the one love of Our Lord and his Blessed Mother ! »

Ven. Auguste Etchecopar SCI
SECOND FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION



The XXVIIth General Chapter, first act

Running, to embrace life's call



«Our faith makes us leave our homes and go forth to encounter others, to share their joys, their hopes and their frustrations. Our faith, "calls us out of our house", to visit the sick, the prisoner and to those who mourn. It makes us able to laugh with those who laugh, and rejoice with our neighbors who rejoice. Like Mary, we want to be a Church which serves, which leaves home and goes forth, which goes forth from its chapels, forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity of a noble and worthy people. Like Mary, Mother of Charity, we want to be a Church which goes forth to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation.»

From the homily of the Holy Father,
Santiago de Cuba, 22 September 2015

The Chapter, day by day

6 May 2017

Opening day of
the XXVII
General Chapter

with the inaugura-
tion of the Retreat
House in San
Bernardino and
the Eucharistic
celebration



7 May | Day retreat on the "Good Shepherd" Sunday

We started with Sunday Mass at the Sanctuary of Caacupé, which is a shrine of Our Lady within the Diocese of Caacupé. The Mass (on the theme of the 'Good Shepherd') was celebrated by the Bishop Claudio Jimenez, with two Betharramite Bishops Emeritus (Mons. Claudio Silvero SCJ and Mons. Ignacio Gogorza SCJ), and thousands of pilgrims. The retreat started on our return from Mass. The retreat was lead by Sr Maria del Carmen Barrios, she gently led us in a meditation on the Icon of the Visitation - 'Running to embrace Life's call'. After the first meditation we did some work privately on three areas; a cry for help, convictions and new life as Betharramites.

Our third meditation which was of great value to us was in language groups. We shared what blockages we experience as Betharramites in community life, our convictions and our way forward as Betharramites. We then shared this with the whole Chapter in the afternoon session. Then Sister Maria Carmen gave us her meditation on the evangelical narrative of the Visitation, emphasizing the theme of fraternal encounter and promotion of human and Christian life in the Church and in our common home, the world.

8 May | Work group by Region

After Morning Prayer, it was the assembly work for the members of the Chapter. The coordinator presented guidelines for the day. We were invited to take a look of hope at the level of our vicariates by

Administration [...]

In addition, the Chapter has laid down guidelines, and indicated means for the protection and recruitment of our people. It has worked to improve the conditions of the Mother House and to procure resources, so that the acquisition of the neighboring inn will hopefully bring to the benefit to our health and a more normal functioning ...

The Chapter has also dealt with the means of keeping hold of and protecting our young men who are threatened by military law. Article 50 of this law, provides for exemption from military service at 30 years of age, for all those who went overseas before the age of 19. It was decided to make use of this means, by placing our young men in Bethlehem or Buenos Aires up to the age required for the exemption.

Because of the threats directed against our personnel, as well as our works, we thought that the best means of supporting both people and works would be to establish centres of recruitment through apostolic schools. We shall endeavour, therefore, to found a residence in Spain, fertile in religious vocations, to recruit vocations for us.

Besides these important questions, we focussed as always on the duty of maintaining and strengthening the spirit of the Institute, and the constant practice of religious discipline.

The *Book of Customs* is one of the most useful and necessary means for attaining this end; it applies the Constitutions, and is the best commentary, in relating the daily practice of our

religious life to our ancient traditions. The various General Chapters examined and approved many of these customs, and instructed us to complete them. We tried to prepare this work with our Council; If it is not fully complete, it will at least be very useful for settling uncertainties, for eliminating some differences, and for establishing a better order with a greater uniformity. God willing, this *Book of Customs* will be printed and given to each one before long.

There is in the Constitutions a point whose practice troubles some consciences; I mean the Economy, as it is exercised in the colleges belonging to the Bishop. The Chapter, recognising the special situation of these houses, declared that the community bursar will only be entrusted with funds belonging to the community, and that (Diocesan funds excepted) he will take care of all material matters, in accordance with our Constitutions and under the orders of the local Superior.

I think you have a general idea of all of our work. Far from it being a burden to us, we study with calm and generosity the difficulties of the present without abandoning any of our posts; We have to protect our youth, and establish some houses of recruitment. These necessities will impose a redoubling of courage and generosity. We must redouble our efforts and multiply ourselves. But let us have in view only the common good; Although we must spend ourselves daily in sacrifices, these will not last forever. Emergencies will pass; But Love remains; The works

Echoes from a distant Chapter

IN 1890, WHEN FR. AUGUST ETCHECOPAR WAS REELECTED AS SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE CONGREGATION, HE WAS 60 AND HIS HEALTH WAS IN DECLINE. FOLLOWING THIS RENEWED TRUST RECEIVED FROM HIS BRETHREN, HE GAVE A LECTURE IN WHICH HE EXPRESSED, AS HUMBLE AS A NOVICE, HIS STATE OF MIND AND RECOUNTED THE ANXIETIES, THE QUESTIONS AND THE HOPES OF THE BETHARRAMITE CHAPTER MEMBERS OF THE END OF THE XIXTH CENTURY. SOME KIND OF DUSTY ANTIQUE? NOT SO SURE...

«Notified to the Holy See as Superior General, by the confidence of my Brothers, I would like, in this first sharing, to tell you of the feelings that profoundly stir me. What on earth could make them chose someone who sees himself as nothing and who is nothing but impotence? Ah! One thing: I see it well: It must be what I have said and done to attract and melt hearts to imitate that of our venerable Founder. If this is a merit, I confess that I do have the desire to obtain it, and this desire possesses me, and by the grace of God may it always possess me.

So it is to the mind of Father Garicoits and to his heart that I attach myself, and bind myself to you once more, full of confidence in both his support and in the ever deeper veneration that you carry for his holiness, his virtues and that supernatural paternity that ennobles and drives you.

But what fear is mingled with this confidence! My weak shoulders shudder, feeling the weight of the burden from which they would have loved to be forever spared! What arrows have pierced my soul! How many tears have I poured before God who knows me and must judge me!



The times are hard and the storm that batters the Church and which will pile up difficulties in the future, demands so much wisdom, prudence, firmness, sacrifice on the part of all !! We have military laws which threaten to rob us of our young people, so much needed now to preserve our present works. And with this diminution of our personnel, we ourselves must think of the means to recruit, to found here and there, to repair our losses, and not go to ruin.

How can we cope with all the different needs, and sustain courage, then find new resources in men, money and generosity? The Chapter has clearly outlined and organised the

noting the concrete signs that show our desire to be at the service of life, while considering the resistance that we encounter. We began by a personal reflection, then we shared with the Vicariate. Each Vicariate had to report at the level of the Region.

We concluded the day with the Eucharistic celebration presided over by the Superior General, Fr. Gaspar Fernández Pérez SCJ.

9 May | The life of the Regions

The work of the General Chapter entered the lives of the individual Vicariates of the Regions.

We heard about the Vicariates of St Michael Garicoits Region. With the help of images, the chapter members travelled virtually along a journey that led them from France to Spain, from the Holy Land to Italy, from Ivory Coast to Central Africa.

Everyone has been able to know the reality of each Vicariate, noting that beside some wrinkle that appears on the face of the Congregation, we always come with a smile of joy, that does not give in.

We also heard from the Regional Superior of the St Michael Garicoits Region, Fr. Jean-Luc Morin scj, to make an assessment of the overall situation of the Region.

The Eucharistic celebration ended the day, and was presided over by Fr. Tidkham Jailertrit SCJ, Regional Vicar of Thailand.



10 May | The life of the Regions (continuation)

The chapter listened to the life of the Betharramite Religious in the Region of Father Auguste Etchecopar. The Vicariate "Argentina-Uruguay" showed us how a collaboration with the laity allowed a great vitality despite the reduction of the number of the religious.

Paraguay told us that while renewing the management of the colleges, it manages to make new missionary choices, by opening a centre for drug addicts.

Brazil was able to leave parish structure enough to go to missionary places that were often neglected.

In the afternoon Fr. Gustavo Agin's report informed us of his 6-year experience as Regional Superior.

We then went on to present the Vicariates of the Region of Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified. The England Vicariate told us how much it receives from the solidarity lived with India and Thailand. Thailand told us how much the missionary flame received from the elders remains very alive today. Fr. Austin Hughes, Regional Superior, made a synthesis with a report filled with hope without hiding the weaknesses.

In the early afternoon we welcomed Fathers Stervin and Biju Antony who come from India and Fr. Yesudas who comes from the new reality of Vietnam.

Our hearts united in sadness and prayer when Fr. Tiziano, Regional Vicar of the Central African Republic, told us about the violence that had caused so many victims in Niem (Central African Republic).

As we celebrated the Eucharist we remembered the Vicariates who shared their experiences with the Chapter. The Mass was presided by Fr. Jean Luc, Regional Superior of the Region "Saint Michael Garicoits".



11 May | Report of the Superior General

Today, the General Chapter listened attentively to Rev Fr Gaspar SCJ, our Superior General. He shared honestly the movement of the Congregation in the three Regions.

Special mention was made on Formation and Community Life. He emphasised on the need to grasp, to pray and to put into practice the proper meaning of the 'Rule of Life' in our communities. Fr Jean-Do shared with us the functioning of the commission appointed by the Superior General to Look at the possibilities of improving the patrimony of Betharram in France. Though it was

considered something not so positive, slowly one could see the gradual success of the commission which bears fruit today.

Fr Graziano our General Bursar shared with us the patrimony and the General accounts of the Congregation, though there is a challenge for Region, Vicariate and Community to contribute, to share and to be faithful to the gifts that entrusted to us.

The day ended with the celebration of the Eucharist by Fr. Fulgencio SCJ.

12 May | The Preparatory Commission of the General Chapter presented a plan of the topics for reflection and sharing; Appointment of a Commission in charge of drawing up the Acts of the Chapter. Group Work in order to identify the issues for reflection.

13 May | In assembly: the groups present the outcome of their work. Assembly debate. Presentation of the Indian Vicariate (Region Saint Mary of Jesus Crucified). The Assembly will decide the topics on which the Chapter will have to work.

14 May | Solemnity of Saint Michael Garicoïts, our Founder

Solemn celebration in *San José* Parish; Festival at the Sports Centre Léon Condou; Sharing with the lay associates of the three Vicariates of the Region; Message of Fr. Gaspar; Lay associates; power point presentation of the Congregation; sharing; closing prayer based on the Magnificat; Back to San Bernardino.

Schedule until the conclusion of the Chapter

Monday 15 May	Work Group on the topics approved in the Assembly	Work Group on the topics approved in the Assembly
Tuesday 16 May	Work Group on the topics approved in the Assembly	Work Group on the topics approved in the Assembly
Wednesday 17 May	Work Group on the topics approved in the Assembly	Work Group on the topics approved in the Assembly
Thursday 18 May	Election of the Superior General	Election of the members of the General Council
Friday 19 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting of the motions. - The Commission in charge of the Acts starts drawing up the Acts of the Chapter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting of the motions. - The Commission in charge of the Acts carries on drawing up the Acts of the Chapter.
Saturday 20 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting of the motions. - The Commission in charge of the Acts carries on drawing up the Acts of the Chapter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting of the motions. - The Commission in charge of the Acts carries on drawing up the Acts of the Chapter.
Sunday 21 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting of the motions. - The Commission in charge of the Acts carries on drawing up the Acts of the Chapter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting of the motions. - The Commission in charge of the Acts finishes the drawing up the Acts of the Chapter.
Monday 22 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Presentation</i> of the Acts of the XXVII General Chapter to the Assembly; - <i>Votation and approval</i> of the Acts by the Assembly. 	Closure of the XXVII GENERAL CHAPTER. Thanksgiving Prayer. Singing of the TE DEUM... at 5.00: Departure for Ciudad del Este.
Tuesday 23 May	Relaxation day	Relaxation day
Wednesday 24 May	Relaxation day	Relaxation day
Thursday 25 May	Relaxation day	Back to Asunción
Friday 26 May	DEPARTURES	DEPARTURES

