



Dear Confreres,

We have come to the summer appointment with this newsletter of information on financial vicissitudes of our missionary Institute.

1. General Assembly for Provincial Treasurers and Procurators. The General Council has confirmed the date for the next General Assembly for Provincial Treasurers and Procurators: the Assembly will take place in Rome starting from September 21st until October 1st, 2014.

All the Provincial and Delegation Treasurers and Procurators, together with the members of the Council for Finance, are invited to take part. The details about the programme of the Assembly will be sent out in due time. What is recommended, for the time being, is that all make a memorandum of the dates.

Among the topics to be discussed, it will be certainly included: TCF, chart of accounts, legal procedures (concerning provinces and enterprises), revision of the General Directory, accounting, relationship between provincial superior and provincial treasurer and revision of the journey undertaken from Chapter 2009 to Chapter 2015.

2. Council for Finance. The meeting of the Council for Finance (CF) was held on May 6-9.

Fr. Luigi Gabaglio, provincial treasurer in Uganda and the new representative of Anglophone Africa, participated in it for the first time. The meeting mainly dealt with the revision of the financial reports of the General Direction and circumscriptions.

The next meeting of the Council for Finance will be held from 26 to 28 November, 2013

3. Post-Chapter Planning. The CF has made a brief assessment of the post-chapter planning and the theme will be taken up again in November to define the way to achieve the objectives during the last part of the six-year period. In a nutshell, it could be said that the first three years after the Chapter were dedicated to the implementation of the Provincial Total Common Fund (Guidelines, Continental Assemblies, Chart of Accounts).

Now, we have already entered into the second part of the six-year period which will be dedicated mainly to training and formation: Course for Treasurers, Scholasticates and CIF, General Assembly, Specializations.

To these will be added other elements coming from the Chapter or from other sources: pen-

sion funds, evaluation of property, solidarity among the provinces.

4. Questionnaire on the Comboni enterprises. During the meeting of the CF, Fr. Giusti has submitted a summary of the responses received to the questionnaire on the Comboni enterprises (works) and on the organizational arrangements.

After two-mailings of the questionnaire, 11 circumscriptions, out of 29, answered. Against all evidence, some provinces wrote that they did not have any enterprise.

To define the characteristics (and thus the responsibility) of an enterprise, to establish clear rules for its supervision and its management, are urgencies that cannot be postponed.

5. General Administration's Financial Report. The 2012 Financial Report of the General Administration was approved by the General Council last June. The approval by the GC is only the final stage of an articulated process which starts with the accounts audit by two expert consultants (confreres) who present their independent evaluation to the GC; after that the revision of the Report is examined by the Council for Finance, which offers the GC a consultative opinion on all financial matters.

As usual, full copy of the Report, with details and figures, is sent to the Circumscription superiors and treasurers. All the confreres have the right to examine the Report and may do so by approaching their own provincial treasurer to access it.

The year 2012 was a period of great changes, due to the revision of the chart of accounts and the adoption of a new program for accounting. This required a very demanding job of updating and reorganizing the office. Consequently, the financial report of the General Administration was also prepared in accordance with the reporting format recently adopted by the Institute. All the changes are meant to increase the awareness of our economic life and promote a common journey of responsibility in the management of financial resources.

6. Financial Reports of the Circumscriptions. Almost all the districts (28 out of 30) have sent their 2012 financial reports.

The majority of the reports received (24 out of 28) was prepared according to the new chart of accounts, although with varying degrees of un-

derstanding of the same. It was a good result, given the extent of the changes.

Some reports (5 out of 28) were received only in digital form. The presence of explanatory notes (19 out of 28) is a good help to the understanding of the financial statements. When they are not there, their lack is felt greatly.

Too often the balances at the beginning of the year do not match the balances at the end of the previous year. In some cases the practice of zeroing the balance of the year through the refinancing of funds continues: this is not considered a good administrative practice. The handling of provincial funds too needs to be clarified.

As every year, a summary of the reports has been prepared and will be sent to the circumscriptions along with the report of the General Administration. The data may provide a starting point for many reflections.

Generally speaking, the year 2012 ended with a good profit. This should not obscure the fact that some circumscriptions are going through a very difficult financial moment.

7. Appointments of Provincial Treasurers. In recent months, two circumscriptions have appointed a new treasurer:

- 1) Asia: Fr. Raoul Tarabanza
- 2) Poland: Fr. Rafal Leszczyński

With them, the number of treasurers appointed in 2013 has increased to five.

Among the new appointees, four have participated in the course of October 2012. These appointments have caused the average age of Treasurers to drop from 61 to 58.5.

The total provincial treasurers replaced in the last 42 months has gone up to 20: 3 in 2010, 9 in 2011 and 3 in 2012. The remaining nine treasurers, of whom 4 were appointed in 2008 and 5 much earlier, are still carrying on.

8. Extraordinary Contributions to the GA. In March, the Superior General sent a letter to the circumscriptions, where he presented the needs for 2013 and, at the same time, a brief report of the year 2012.

The data show that all the extraordinary contributions received by General Administration were redistributed among the provinces in different forms.

In this voluntary interaction of the various members that form our body, the General Administration plays an important task of coordination and balance, so that everyone has what he needs to live and carry out his commitment. Obviously, the General Administration can perform this service only in virtue of the fact that the different parts of the body contribute freely and generously.

9. Building Renovation Fund of Inalienable Assets. Of the 24 circumscriptions that make reference

to the Treasurer General Office for the provision of this fund, 18 have regularly paid the annual fee during 2012, while three others have already reached the roof allowed. The provision is not automatic, but the provincial treasurer, each year, must inform the Treasurer General when they want this to happen.

10. Interventions of extraordinary administration.

In the Consulta of March and June 2013, the General Council has approved several administrative transactions of an extraordinary nature, as required by the respective provinces:

- 1) Kenya: purchase of land in the area Embakasi (Nairobi) for the construction of a Church and a Centre for Mission Promotion.
- 2) DCA: building a house for the community in Santo Tomas (El Salvador).

11. Administration Course for the Scholastics of Casavatore.

From June 24 to 28 a course on financial management was held at Casavatore's scholastic ate, attended by 8 confreres.

The program was carried out in its entirety with the assistance of Fr. Codianni, Fr. Locatelli and Bro. Giusti (through a videoconference from Rome): they developed the "theoretical" part. The practical part of the course (book-keeping) was handled by Fr. Lurati.

The scholastics actively participated in the discussions and showed appreciation for the opportunity to speak on these issues.

In the course of the year 2014, we hope to implement the same course in the four English-speaking communities of formation.

For those who have resisted heroically until the end in reading about so many issues, which are not always immediately attractive, I propose again a famous quote from A. de Saint-Exupéry, with the hope for me and for all never to lose sight of the big horizon for which we work.

"If you want to build a boat, do not gather men to cut wood, divide the tasks and give orders, but rather teach them to long for the vast and endless sea."

Keep up the good work!

P. Claudio Lurati
Treasurer General