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**MANUAL FOR BASIC AND ON-GOING COMBONI  
MISSIONARY FORMATION ON THE VALUES OF  
JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE PROTECTION OF  
CREATION**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Comboni formative proposal has privileged the integrative model, urging both formators and candidates in formation, as well as each Comboni Missionary in on-going formation, to assimilate and make their own the values of the Kingdom of God. It is a personal and communitarian choice that makes visible the fact of being a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth through a style of community life, open to others and to reality. The project of missionary life must be continually revisited in the various stages of life and in the various socio-cultural contexts in which we live.

This manual is intended to enrich this formative process with some elements that arise from the journey made as a Comboni family in the field of JPIC, as well as from the presence and sharing of life with and among the impoverished, excluded and abandoned, for whom Saint Daniel Comboni was willing to give his life 100 times, if necessary. The impoverished, excluded and abandoned people had taken possession of his heart (WR. 941), just as they had taken possession of the Pierced Heart of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who offered his own life as ransom for all.

The evangelizing praxis of Jesus of Nazareth and the sharing of life with the impoverished, constitute the path on which the missionary disciple's commitment to the service of the Kingdom advances, making visible in all his ministerial service the values of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC).

### INTRODUCTION

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## A. JPIC: TRANSVERSE AXIS OF MISSIONARY SERVICE

The dramatic state of health of the planet today - "**mistreated and wounded**" - and the tragic living conditions of its inhabitants - "**human waste**" - impose on Christian communities the acceptance of historical responsibility and the urgency to "**change course**", questioning their lifestyle and the model of production and consumption that generate death and destruction<sup>1</sup>. This reality motivates us and moves us to qualify our mission. The paradigms, the community and spirituality itself take on new elements.



Requalifying the mission with a vision more in keeping with the times we live in implies a slow, difficult and profound process. It must be faced and lived, from the very stages of formation, to make the values of the Kingdom visible through our actions. A journey of conversion to which we are all called.

In a world dominated by an extractive and predatory capitalist economic system, where technology and science have separated from a project of humanization, we are called each day to "take care" of Life. Our commitment to the reconstruction of the community context makes us sharers in the work of a God who still continues to create today; and that is why we are invited to review our lifestyles as well as our style of living the mission.

Today it becomes important to make present the values linked to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

For this journey we propose three approaches:

1. **Service.** Through Caritas and other organizations, to live the service of welcoming and accompanying people going through moments of trial and difficulty. This approach is very widespread in ecclesial communities and continues to be effective especially in times of social, environmental and relational emergency. A shining example today is the reception of refugees and migrants and the Church's effort for a fruitful process of integration and intercultural exchange.

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<sup>1</sup> *Laudato Si.*, outlines for group and community study. Introduction

2. The **convocation**. Thanks to its role of aggregation and the search for communion among people and between peoples, the community of Jesus' disciples has an ethical force recognized and appreciated by many. This enables it to convoke groups of all kinds, with different ideologies and conflicting factions. A shared commitment to improve the conditions of people and the environment in which we live. A current example was the invitation of scholars and scientists by Pope Francis for the drafting of the Encyclical **Laudato Si**. In recent times he has also called young economists for reflection, vision and to study the need to sign a pact for a world economy of solidarity (Assisi, March 2020). A further call is the pact on education with all those responsible for the world academic world, those responsible for religions and socio-cultural associations (Rome May 2020).
3. The **prophetic** approach of **denunciation and announcement**. Through one's own witness of life, it is important to continually say and re-affirm to those in power, both locally and globally, the whole Truth about the safeguarding of the common home, about life, the organization of public life, the redistribution of wealth, the right to housing, work, education, leisure, freedom of conscience and the freedom to profess one's faith. A very clear example was John Paul II's cry "convert" to the Mafia on May 9, 1993, in the Valley of the Temples. A cry that the Mafia took as an offense to avenge, as in fact happened, five months later (on the 15th September of the same year), with the killing of Don Pino Puglisi in Palermo, because revenge is the language of the Mafia.

On the one hand we are called to give a name to the established social sin (the devil who possesses the social structures) and, on the other hand, to announce the ever-new history under construction, the signs of the Kingdom and the Resurrection already present among us. It is urgent to witness that a different world is possible and is already under construction, to offer hope by showing the actions of the little ones, which prove to be innovative and prophetic. In this, we can also give visibility to the significant experiences of the Combonian Family.

To be disciples of Jesus of Nazareth is an invitation not only to know how to articulate these three evangelical dimensions, but also to adopt them in the challenges and circumstances of the moment. The aim is to transform reality and to bring out, in a progressive way, the project of the Kingdom of Peace, Justice, Integrity of Creation, fraternity and reconciliation.

To make our missionary actions concrete in the transformation of the reality entrusted to us, the commitment to JPIC is made concrete through ministries. These are closely linked to a missionary ecclesial context and become necessary and indispensable when we begin to

see reality with the eyes of faith. One cannot remain indifferent to a reality that daily, and in many forms, denies the life of people and of the planet itself. We are called to "**give reason for our hope**" (1 Pet 3:15). It is the continuous effort to be authentically Christian, faithful to Life, which is the core of the message of Jesus of Nazareth (Jn 10:10). In proclaiming his message in contexts of oppression and injustice, we cannot but become involved in processes of human promotion, development and liberation (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 31).

The liturgy also has a fundamental role in such processes. In celebrations and moments of spirituality we are called to make present the signs and symbols of a shared life. It is the daily effort to unite faith with life. Prayer becomes the privileged space to share, in the light of the Word, life and commitment for a more just and united world.

Finally, the commitment to JPIC is a strong point of encounter and dialogue between different religious experiences and social practice, as witnessed recently in the document on "Human Brotherhood for World Peace and Common Coexistence" by Francis and Ahmad Al-Tayyeb (*Apostolic Journey to the United Arab Emirates*, 3-5 February 2019).

## B. THE MISSION FROM THE MARGINS

### 1. The poor evangelize us

Opting for the "**poorest and most abandoned**" means looking at reality with their own eyes (CA 1997 n. 26). The study, the research, the scientific deepening leads the disciple to make a partisan choice and make himself available to work for the realisation of the expectations of the impoverished. Today the poorest and most abandoned - says Pope Francis - are the scraps of society, those who are not exploited, but rejected, "leftovers" (*Evangelii Gaudium* n. 53).

Already in the fourth century Saint John Chrysostom said that the poor are the sacrament of Christ: "He who said: 'This is my body', is the same one who said: 'You have seen me hungry and have not fed me' and 'What you have done to the least of my brothers you have done to me'".

Paul VI, too, on his journey to Colombia, during the Mass celebrated for the campesinos (August 23, 1968), said: "You, dear children, are Christ for us. And we who have the formidable destiny of being the Vicar of Christ in his Magisterium of the truth revealed by him, and in his pastoral ministry in the whole Catholic Church, we bow before you and wish to see Christ in you almost reborn and suffering: We have not come to receive your filial acclamations, always pleasing and moving, but to honour the Lord in your persons, to

bow down before them and to tell you that that love, demanded three times by the Risen Christ of Peter (cf. Jn 21:15 ff), of whom we are the humble and latest successor, we render to Him in you, in yourselves. We love you. As Pastors, that is, as associates with your poverty and as those responsible for your guidance, your good, your salvation. We love you with preferential affection; together with us – remember it well, always remember it, the



Holy Catholic Church loves you".

## 2. "I have come to bear witness to the Truth" (Jn. 18, 37-38)

This was the answer that Jesus of Nazareth gave to Pilate, procurator of the Roman Empire, when he was delivered to him by the high priest Caiaphas, to be judged and condemned. Today, as Pilate did at that time, many people ask, "What is the Truth?"

The truth for Pilate was the one that imposed the system of the Roman Empire; in the same way today for a small part of humanity it is the capitalist and predatory economic system, which dictates the rules of the market and imposes its logic with the persuasion of loans and the blackmail of public debt; threatening those who try to oppose it, with the force of arms, not excluding nuclear power. This system feels itself master of the common house and forgets that "the environment is a collective gift, the heritage of all humanity", a "common heritage" to be administered and not to be destroyed (Laudato Si n. 95).

This system remains entrenched in its arrogance and iniquity, because it has neo-gnosticism and post-modernism as ideological allies; the former rejects the articulation between faith and life and the latter casts suspicion on every truth that presents itself as absolute. In this way it feeds the escape from reality and the refuge in an ideal world that does not exist; on the other hand, it favours a "do-it-yourself" truth, artfully fed by the so-called "fake-news" and conspiracy theories.

For Jesus of Nazareth, on the other hand, the ultimate truth is Love, solidarity with the impoverished and the excluded, to the point of giving one's life, trusting that the grain of wheat, fallen to the ground, dies and bears much fruit (Jn 12:24).

Like Jesus, many missionary disciples have testified to the point of bloodshed, as our martyred brothers and sisters remind us. This makes it important to make known the life and martyrdom of the many martyrs of the Combonian Family.

### **3. I have not come to abolish the law, but to fulfil it (Mt 5:17-19)**

Through personal and community discernment, the missionary disciple, enlightened by faith, is educated to articulate the reality of the impoverished whom he sees and the Word of God who listens (CA 2009 n.34).

This is possible to the extent that the missionary accepts the seriousness of the Incarnation, first of all as a gift from God, but also as a challenge for his commitment to presence and solidarity among the impoverished. We believe that communities in impoverished environments and in existential peripheries are a way to proclaim the Gospel effectively.

Discernment - as the concluding document of the Ratio Missionis points out - becomes a *sapiential* and prophetic reading of reality in order to scrutinize it and see in it the signs of the times and places (Gaudium et Spes n. 4, n. 11); the *Kairos*, that is, those positive signs, those germs of life that stimulate change in the system. The transformation of reality according to God's plan is revealed in creation and renewed by His Son Jesus Christ, through the Paschal Mystery of Passion, Death and Resurrection.

### **4. Reconciling all things to Himself (Col 1:20)**

The missionary presence in every context, must make God's plan to gather the lost (Jn 11:52) and to "make peace with the blood of his Cross, that is, through him (Christ), the things that are on earth and those that are in heaven".

This project is divided into three parts:

- a) God wants to create order in creation, and He will accomplish this completely in the *Parusia*.
- b) He does not want "chaos" between the first moment we live and the last, using human authorities, even those who do not recognize Him, to carry out His project.
- c) Since human authorities are confronted with terrible temptations, God's people must have a "different look" (LS 111) in order to cure and profoundly improve lifestyles, production and consumption patterns, the established structures of power that today govern societies.

The outgoing Church - as Pope Francis emphasizes - faces the challenge of imperialism, highlighting the personal and structural evil; all those rebel powers of the world "so that the multiform wisdom of God, through the Church, may now be manifested in heaven to the principalities and powers, according to the plan which it has implemented in Christ" (Eph 3:10).



The disciples of Jesus of Nazareth reject any exclusivist ideology. Following the example of the early Christians, not caring who comes to power, they take an interest in what they do, they analyse their choices to provoke and bring about a new social order capable of promoting justice and peace through the peaceful resolution of conflicts. A society that is equal and plural because it is capable of recognizing and welcoming not only

ideological pluralism, but also cultural pluralism with all the wealth of traditions that it entails, an "ecological society", concerned with creation and the dignity of the human person created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26-27).

##### **5. He who does not gather with me scatters (Lk 11:14)**

The practice of Jesus of Nazareth teaches us that the service of authority must be lived in knowing how to help people to work together, with a common goal.

The Comboni charism has two essential characteristics for community work:

- the importance of decentralization, which allows us to take up and strengthen the value of the method present in San Daniele Comboni's plan to "Regenerate Africa with Africa". This vision is still current and precious because it frees us from any protagonism and "nourishes in us the awareness that our service is temporary" (CA 1998, No.63.1).
- the community understood as a "Cenacle of Apostles". It is the communitarian and ministerial experience that helps people to purify themselves from the apologia of the ego and to have a new look at themselves. It is the place where responsibility does not coincide with mastery but with witness, where our speaking is proactive and not definitive.

The missionary practice capable of transforming reality urges us to know how to live the "places" and "times" of the mission through a missionary methodology. Experience teaches us that the method of the pastoral cycle is preferable: seeing, discerning, planning, acting, evaluating and celebrating.

Among other aspects of this method, we stressed (see The AEFJN Manual, for JPIC groups, Volume 1):

- a) The role of leadership.
- b) Always remaining focused on the goal
- (c) The role of each person for the achievement of the objective
- d) Taking care of oneself (study and time to reflect)
- e) Living missionary responsibility in the community, fostering the participation of all.
- f) Planning and guaranteeing continuity for the success of the project

#### **6. "We have this treasure in clay pots." (2 Cor 4:7-10)**

Comboni has always stressed that humility is one of the fundamental qualities of the missionary (WR 2644; 2890) and associates this virtue with the holiness and ability of his confreres (WR 6855).

The commitment to JPIC will only be realized to the extent that the disciples allow themselves to be accompanied and consoled by the presence of the Spirit of the Risen Jesus.



In a context in which "the human environment and the natural environment degrade together, and in which we will not be able to adequately address environmental degradation if we do not pay attention to the causes related to human and social degradation" (LS 48), the mission of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth is to be witnesses of his love, with no ifs or buts, for "the poorest and most abandoned".

In this we must have the humility to recognize that "solutions cannot come from a single way of interpreting and transforming reality. It is also necessary to have recourse to the different cultural richness of peoples, to art and poetry, to the interior life and spirituality". (LS 63)

## C. PROPOSALS FOR THE VARIOUS FORMATIVE STAGES

There are good formative proposals for the various levels of formation offered by the Assembly of Major Superiors, according to the orientations of the Social Doctrine of the Church; proposals published in our book "Be the change you want to see in the world" on JPIC and the Comboni Family and also commented on by other confreres.

### ONGOING FORMATION

#### **Specific objectives**

1. Cultivate a strong spirituality that leads, in the light of the Word of God and the Social Doctrine of the Church, to listen to God in the reality lived every day, in the situation of the poorest and in Creation.
2. Re-read the charism of the Institute in light of the emergencies and challenges of the times, places, cultures and social current affairs, in order to welcome the newness of the Holy Spirit and to collaborate in the transformation of social reality with the power of the Gospel;
3. To practice personal and communal discernment of what is happening in social reality in order to position oneself critically against ideologies and to be the prophetic voice in the territory;
4. To study and analyse the structural causes of poverty

#### **Contents**

Apart from the systematic study of the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, some aspects of today's reality are priorities with the need to be enlightened by the contents of the Gospel and the Magisterium of the Church:

1. The phenomenon of migration
2. The challenges of science and new technologies
3. The ecological crisis and environmental problems;
4. The solidarity economy;
5. The evangelical foundations of human rights;
6. Pluralism and interreligious dialogue;
7. Culture and inculturation;
8. Christians and political life;
9. Social doctrine, Christian praxis and social ministry;
10. Church bodies and other networks involved in JPIC;
11. Documents of the Institute on JPIC.

## **Experiences**

Among these experiences that make possible the reading of the signs of the times and the realization of a fruitful and prophetic apostolic mission, we can note:

1. Lectio Divina on themes in the Bible that have a link with social justice, active non-violence and the defence of life;
2. The concrete commitment to social and ecological pastoral care;
3. Networking with other committed bodies;
4. The confrontation with the reality of social exclusion and encounters with other people involved in movements and bodies fighting for peace and the safeguarding of Creation.
5. Inter-congregational networking and with other bodies.
6. Creation of conflict resolution groups.

## **Postulancy**

### **Specific objectives**

1. To deepen one's personal relationship with Jesus Christ through concrete attitudes of mercy, compassion, love for life, attention to nature and the simple things of everyday life;
2. To have attitudes of consideration and respect for all people, seeing individual and cultural differences as resources to grow in the relationships of the Kingdom;
3. To become aware of God's call through events in the world at large and where one lives.

### **Contents**

The essential contents of the formation in the postulancy can be structured according to the living conditions of each group:

1. Knowledge of the person of Jesus Christ in the study of the Gospel;
2. Study of the first chapter of the SDC Compendium on God's love for humanity and the anthropology of the SDC;
3. Study of some social encyclicals such as *Populorum Progressio* and *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*;
4. Reading the life of the founder from the point of view of his commitment to the poorest.

### **Experiences**

Among the experiences that can be proposed to the postulants, we propose:

1. Initiation to the Lectio Divina by privileging the passages of the Gospel that present Jesus' love for the Father, for the poor and the suffering, that present the good of each person, the values of fraternity, of service, of caring for Creation;

2. Apostolate within realities of poverty;
3. Analysis, with the method of reviewing life (seeing, judging and acting), of world news, of the local and national socio-political reality, analysis of the world of youth.

## Novitiate

### Specific objectives

1. To intensify the knowledge of Jesus Christ and love for Him by observing His relationship with the apostles and the signs of salvation of the poorest carried out by Him;
2. To reread one's own history as a place of salvation, starting from the gratuitousness of God's love and compassion;
3. Exercise personal and communitarian discernment as a means of being in line with God's love.
4. To take responsibility for the protection of the environment, in an attitude of action of grace for the gift of creation.

### Contents

Some formative content may be:

1. The study of chapters II, III and IV of the SDC Compendium.
2. Deepening the prophetic dimension of Religious Life;
3. Consecration and the social dimension of vows;
4. Studying the Magnificat as a song to God, liberator of the poor and oppressed.
5. Identification of the relationship between the charism of the Institute and the SDC.
6. Studies of the values of justice, peace and the safeguarding of Creation in the documents of the Institute.

### Experiences:

Among the many experiences that can be proposed to the novices, we propose:

1. Lectio Divina, giving priority to the signs that Jesus made in favour of discarded people and foreigners;
2. Analysis of concrete social situations with the method of "seeing, judging and acting";
3. Periods of mission or apostolic experiences in the midst of the poorest and most abandoned of society;
4. Community evaluation of the concrete way to choose to express the commitment to adopt a sober and ecological lifestyle;
5. Special prayers on days when peace, justice and the safeguarding of creation are celebrated.

**Specific objectives**

1. To strengthen the conviction of the centrality of Christ in personal life, seeking to incarnate his feelings and attitudes;
2. To ensure that prayer can be considered as a daily awareness of God's presence and the action of the Holy Spirit in the world, community and personal reality;
3. To practise dialogue, respect and appreciation of differences as a path of collaboration in building peace in the world;
4. Make the choice of a sober and sustainable lifestyle, consistent with the commitment to the poorest and most abandoned.
5. To commit oneself to caring for the environment in daily life.

**Contents**

1. Study the book of the Acts of the Apostles in the perspective of the adherence of peoples to Jesus Christ and the inculturation of faith;
2. Study chapters X, XI and XII of the SDC Compendium.
3. Reading and commentary with sharing of the latest social encyclicals;
4. Study of JPIC values in recent documents of the Institute;
5. Knowledge of the Declaration of Human Rights and other conventions concerning current world challenges;
6. Gathering information on ecological issues and the responsibility of the international community;
7. Knowledge of the paths of interreligious dialogue and ecumenism.

**Experiences**

1. Lectio Divina, with the Acts of the Apostles;
2. Personal and community discernment of the challenges presented by the sociocultural context and the search for answers to these challenges;
3. Periods of mission in the existential peripheries;
4. Community evaluation of the concrete way of expressing the commitment made to adopt a simple, sober and ecological lifestyle;
5. Organization of seminars to study certain aspects of the SDC, involving other consecrated persons;
6. Community discernment during electoral periods on different political choices in the light of the SDC;
7. Reading and sharing articles on certain aspects of JPIC that require responses in the light of the SDC.

## D. ASPECTS NOT TO BE OMITTED IN THE FORMATION PROCESS

For those in basic formation, depending on the stage, it is very important:

- To have more opportunities to experience one's own knowledge and skills by becoming part of a concrete pastoral project.
- To be educated in collaboration with the various ecclesial groups and movements present in civil society.
- To give oneself time for inner growth, so as not to be overwhelmed by the complexity of the reality to be faced.
- To adopt the method of the pastoral cycle, in order to grow in learning, in the exchange of knowledge and in order to achieve the objectives set.
- To learn to verify missionary pastoral practice in order to strengthen a broader and deeper view of reality and thus better respond to its challenges.
- To promote more immersion in the reality of the impoverished.
- In missionary experiences give preference to the geographical and existential peripheries as Pope Francis has accustomed us to see, feel and live.

## E. MINISTERIAL AREAS TO PRESENT

1. Following the indications of CA '15, n. 45, we can identify experiences in the context of continental priorities, such as inter-religious dialogue, education, health, mass media, missionary animation, urban pastoral care, pastoral care among indigenous peoples, among Afro-descendants, nomadic pastors, migrants, refugees and youth (no. 45.3).
2. In AC'03, no. 43 and 50, we also find the fundamental rights of persons and peoples, new types of poverty, the ethical demands of the economy, politics and the consequences of debt, and Comboni works of human promotion.
3. In CA '09, nos. 62 and 63, we find in addition: pygmies, formation of leaders, marginalized youth and slums.

## F. A TOOLBOX FOR SOCIAL MINISTRY

The apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG) invites the Church to a new evangelization and explains how this is new and the fruit of ecclesial and pastoral renewal. These two dimensions represent the two sides of the same coin and are rendered by the image of the "outgoing Church" in a permanent state of mission. It needs new styles, approaches, languages and structures as appropriate channels for the evangelization of the world today. It is the model of the ministerial Church, by its missionary nature, capable of

announcing and witnessing to the Gospel with joy and prophecy. To evangelize is to make the Kingdom of God present in the world (EG 176) and the EG devotes an entire chapter - the fourth, which is also the longest - to the social dimension of evangelization. It is not an appendix, or a corollary of evangelization, but a constitutive aspect of it, which cannot be separated from the ecclesial and pastoral dimension (cf. Justice in the World 6).

From an operational point of view, a missionary approach to evangelization needs a ministerial path, which EG 24 summarizes in five phases: taking the initiative (primerear), getting involved, accompanying, bearing fruit, and celebrating. The beauty of this contribution lies in the simplicity, immediacy and lightness of the journey, in which one easily recognizes oneself. On the contrary, the same missionary experiences can be effectively recounted by following this scheme of reference, precisely because it makes it easier to focus on the essential aspects of such experiences and ministerial paths. In addition, the progression and linking of the five phases provides methodological orientation, so that by entering into a given situation one knows how to orient oneself, where to begin, what path to follow and how to conclude.

But above all, while on the one hand there is a marked assonance between these phases and the characteristics of the Comboni charism, on the other hand, for each phase we may also put together operational tools that strengthen the capacity of the ministerial teams. In the table below these relationships are synthesized, sending back to another place the due in-depth studies. From the articulation of competences and crucial instruments for each phase of the ministerial process, it is clear that, rather than aiming at a "super" missionary specialized in everything, it is necessary to put together ministerial teams in which members contribute and harmonize different capacities.

## 1. TAKING THE INITIATIVE

It is the voice of the Spirit in the cry of the excluded, devastated Creation and existential peripheries that leads one to take the initiative. This requires an incarnated spirituality and the capacity to listen to reality, analysing it by letting oneself be touched and questioned. Listening to reality leads not so much to an individual reaction of emotions but to a shared response of "heart": a heart attentive and docile to the Spirit.

### 1.1 In the Comboni charism

This listening corresponds to grasping "the hour of God" and to look at what the Spirit is doing in history (grasping and responding to the signs of the times and places).

## 1.2 Operational Tools

Deep listening:

- a. structural analysis;
- b. conjunctural analysis;
- c. contemplation.

Discernment:

- a. Community method of discernment

## 2. GETTING INVOLVED

This aspect of the ministerial path requires a system and knowledge of the dynamics of integral human development. It is not enough to give generous impetus with such good will: if not accompanied by an appropriate method and attitudes, it easily ends up creating dependency and misunderstanding instead of liberation processes.

### 2.1 In the Comboni charism

In this passage we rediscover the Comboni sense of "common cause" with people.

### 2.2 Operational Tools

The pastoral cycle

- a. Insertion
- b. Socio-cultural analysis
- c. Theological reflection
- d. Process of action - including programming, training, implementation, monitoring and verification, celebration



It is not only an instrument that orders and organizes the social ministry, but it is also a ministerial form of mindset that brings together social sciences and spirituality, methodical vision and practical tools, professional and pastoral skills.

### 3. ACCOMPANYING

Effective accompaniment makes use of several instruments, first and foremost those that facilitate participation. Beyond the core competencies of facilitation, awareness raising, mobilization, and organization, there are many methods and participatory approaches that can be used. There is a rich heritage available, from which one can draw, but in a critical way: in fact, it is not the "techniques" in themselves that guarantee authentic popular participation, but rather the basic approach, attitudes, and way of relating.

#### 3.1 In the Comboni charism

Involvement and accompaniment go together. It is like saying that the methodology of the pastoral cycle is not only a competence of the ministerial team, but a path to be taken together with the community, the people, the true protagonists of the process of transformation - in Comboni's words - "Africa with Africa".

#### 3.2 Operational Tools

= Methods of:

- a. Conscientization
- b. Facilitation of participation
- c. Community organization
- d. Intercultural Dialogue
- e. Reconciliation (with related spirituality)

= Collaborative Ministry Methodology

### 4. BEARING FRUIT

In this passage we find the central idea of Comboni's Plan: Regeneration. This is a Comboni interpretation of bearing ministerial fruit, in the logic of gift and grace.

#### 4.1 In the Comboni Charism

Regeneration passes through the Paschal Mystery, as it was for Comboni (cf. "The works of God are born at the foot of the Cross").

#### 4.2 Operational Tools

In relation to the social ministry and the processes of social transformation, it is useful to refer to the four principles (EG 217-237) which together offer us a guide to bearing fruit on the complex journey with popular networks and movements:

- a. Time is greater than space;
- b. unity prevails over conflict;

- c. reality is more important than the idea;
- d. the whole is superior to the part.

## 5. CELEBRATING

The moment of ministerial evaluation should be valued as an opportunity for personal and community growth in service to the Gospel and the Kingdom of God.

### 5.1 In the Comboni charism

A re-reading of history and life in the light of faith (cf. Plan for the Regeneration of Africa with Africa), uniting Word and life.

### 5.2 Operational Tools

- = Liturgical celebrations
- = Memorial Days



## G. HELPING TO EXPERIENCE GPIC VALUES IN MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI emphasizes that "contemporary man listens more to witnesses than to teachers, or if he listens to teachers he does so because they are witnesses" (EN n. 41).

From this emerges the importance of presenting some of the experiences carried out by the Comboni family in different geographical and cultural contexts in the line of what is proposed in volume 2, which will be published shortly. Significant experiences of the young people themselves in formation can be presented. The preparation of a card can help to reflect on their encounter with the impoverished and their consequent commitment to JPIC.

Proposal for a card/scheme for reflection on the ministerial experience:

- 1 Describe the experience – or, preferably, have the chosen person do it directly – otherwise  
present a short report or even include some videos or photos.
2. The experience recounts an attempt to transform reality or to form consciences for a commitment to change.
3. Provide some questions for a workshop and involve the participants, for example:
  - What strikes you in this testimony?
  - In your opinion, what are the strengths of this experience?
  - What are its weak points?
  - Is there anything you would change?
  - Do you think that this experience can involve others and can have continuity?
  - Would you like to be part of it? Why?

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