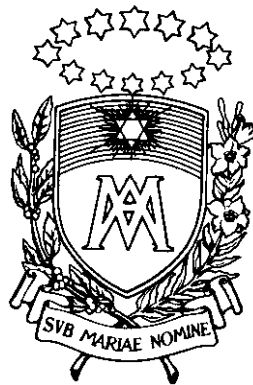


27TH GENERAL CHAPTER
OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

**2001 GENERAL CHAPTER
STATEMENTS
AND DECISIONS**



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INTRODUCTION

The 27th general chapter of the Society of Mary took place in Rome from the 3rd to the 29th of September 2001. After a wide consultation of the membership, four main agenda items were brought to the chapter: 'structures in the Society', 'vocation and mission of the Society of Mary in the 21st century', 'leadership in the Society' and 'Marist community life'. After reviewing the situation of the Society, at the beginning of the chapter, formation policy and mission policy also received some significant attention. The work of the chapter then resulted in the production of five texts: a) Declaration on the Mission at the Beginning of the 21st Century; b) Changing Structures; c) Governance of the International Society; d) Formation; e) Mission Districts.

The chapter also produced some statements on finance, as well as a list of changes to our legislation (chapter decrees) together with some enabling legislation. The changes in our legislation made a new edition of our legislative decrees desirable. They are published in a little volume that, this time, contains only *legislative* decrees.

As all four branches of the Marist Family were holding their chapters at the same time, they were able to come together on the 12th of September. Three of the various inter-branch working groups presented to the respective chapters recommendations that have been supported by our chapter. A fourth recommendation came from an inter-branch workshop on Marist Studies which met in France during February 2001; it also received the support of our chapter. All of these recommendations are presented in this report.

A considerable amount of time and energy of the chapter was devoted to reviewing the relevant legislation of the Society in order to establish the procedures for the elections of the superior general, four assistants and the vicar-general. The results of these elections are registered here.

Much of what happened in the chapter of 2001 did not lead to documents. The chapter was an opportunity for many Marists to meet and to exchange experiences and information. All felt hit by the events in the USA on the 11th of September. The next day, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, brought together the capitulants of the four Marist congregations for an impressive celebration. The common audience with pope John Paul II was a precious reminder of the importance of our communion with the Bishop of Rome, as we are preparing to respond to the needs of the Church (*Constitutions* 16) at the beginning of this new millennium.

The chapter did not answer the expectations of quite a number of Marists. In that sense this collection of statements and decisions reflects a difficult moment in the history of our congregation. We have to recognize humbly where we are. Nonetheless, the significance of the chapter of 2001 will depend on what we make of the orientations it succeeded to draw up. If we set off in the directions outlined in these documents, on the personal level, in our communities, and in the Society at large, we may have a good hope that this chapter will produce its fruits 'at vintage time' (Mt: 21,41).

Jan Hulshof
Superior General

Paul Frechette
Secretary General

**DECLARATION ON THE MISSION
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY
27TH GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY**

Preamble

1. Wherever they labour, Marists are touched by global forces that are transforming whole societies. Since they live and minister in so many different cultures and among so many different local communities, it is difficult for this chapter to assess the impact of these changes in any neutral way. For some people, technologies offer hope of better standards of living, for others they seem to accentuate the inequitable distribution of wealth, impoverishing whole communities. For some they bring about social and cultural opportunities for exchange unheard of in human history, and for others they endanger the vitality and diversity of local peoples by undermining traditional cultures and values. The global culture that is emerging seems to foreshadow a new age for some, while for others it can push religious faith to the margins of life and consciousness. Concern for world peace, human rights and the environment has grown enormously in recent years, particularly among the young. This chapter urges Marists to evaluate these changes in constant dialogue with one another and with the people among whom they live and minister. This will allow them to discern what may be of the Spirit and what may need challenging in order to protect human dignity and the integrity of the environment.

The Situation Today

2. The Christian churches are seeking in faith the mystery of God's purpose in this dawning millennium. The Catholic Church prepared for this time through the renewal and conversion called for by the Second Vatican Council. Having sought forgiveness for past sins, it now seeks to reach out to all peoples and cultures in one communion. Living the mission entrusted to it in the gospels, the Church strives to be a sign and instrument of the unity of all humankind, and even of all creation. It searches too for inner unity, to be a reconciled and reconciling household of God. Recent missiology has emphasised that the Church's call to spread the gospel is a reflection of the most intimate life of the Trinity. The Father pours out his love by sending Jesus Christ, who lives among us through the power of the Spirit, reconciling all in all. Mary was overshadowed by the Spirit when God became flesh in Jesus Christ. Marists see Mary as their model and inspiration for understanding the global mission of the Church in Christ.

3. Church teaching points to the fruits of the Spirit already present in the spiritual and religious quests of all peoples. Marists want to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and witness to him in their own lives. Therefore they can support the communities and cultures among which they work as these strive themselves to discover the hidden God. At the same time, they strive to discover Christ in the members of their own community. Imitating Mary, they seek to bring to birth these hidden workings of God in the world. Marists want to be 'hidden and unknown', so that they may better discern this hidden presence of God. That is their unique gift and calling.

4. The seeds of the Marist vision were sown in a time of rapid change and struggle in France. Many of the divisions and issues of that time still resonate throughout the world. The approval of the Society came about when the first groups of Marists were small, isolated and unsure of their future. Despite this, they set out in hope on new tasks to utterly unknown lands. Today our Society is shrinking and aging. In some places it seems to be dying. At the same time, new seeds of hope spring up not just in mission districts but also through creative initiatives in other areas. Though diminishing in numbers, aging provinces share their wisdom, reflections and fruits of holiness with undying hope.

5. Studies of our charism with its unwaning freshness point to new possibilities of Marist spirit and presence even in this age of cultural and spiritual upheaval. We can explore further how the call to evangelise all nations is to be achieved precisely by living 'hidden and unknown in the world'. Living unobtrusively among the people we wish to

serve, we create environments that invite their trust and friendship.

6. Such is the depth of Colin's insight. His vision of "the whole world Marist" can now be understood afresh. Many lay Marists are responding fully to the anointing they received at baptism. They share in the priestly, prophetic and royal ministry of Christ (*Lumen Gentium* 34-36). In doing so, they show us how to shape the world in a distinctively Marian way. In this movement we see something of the fulfilment of the founders' vision of a Marist family of many branches that would herald the coming of a new Church.

General Principles

7. The way we live out our mission is already defined in our Constitutions. Here we wish to highlight some principles that, because of the particular nature of the times in which we are living, we consider to be especially important.

8. Not only do we need to understand our own culture, but also the social and religious situation of other cultures which surround us. Guided by the intuitions of our heart, the help of human sciences and the light of our faith, we wish also to listen to and understand other Christian Churches and other religions. We want to enter into dialogue with them and with all persons of good will in order to work together for mercy, reconciliation, justice and peace.

9. From the fruitful dialogue between these cultures and our Marist identity, the forms of government, formation and pastoral collaboration that we need will emerge.

10. In communion with the Church, we wish to share with our brothers and sisters the love of the Father that Jesus has revealed to us, above all in his paschal mystery. This gospel of God's love is to reach the hearts of men and women and of the culture in which they live. Therefore as this new century begins the processes of inculturation are fundamental.

11. We are one, single, apostolic community, sharing the same mission. Flowing out of our missionary character we have a universal call that finds expression in the various local churches and apostolates in which we are involved. It is there that the vitality of the Society acquires different faces. In this way, we are all responsible for the life and mission of the Society of Mary.

12. We affirm, in accordance with our Constitutions, that we form a communion for mission (*Constitutions* 91ff). The community is for us a key place of evangelisation and it is there that, in the light of faith, we discover the meaning of our mission (*Constitutions* 126). In this way, we create harmony between the contemplative and the apostolic life.

13. We are called to make the Church present where it does not yet exist and where others do not wish to go. We are also called to renew the communities, which already exist and leave when the local community has reached maturity (*Constitutions* 14, 137). We confirm our commitment to the poor and most abandoned and those suffering from injustices (*Constitutions* 12). As instruments of mercy we desire to bring the local Churches nearer the Marian profile so that they reflect the maternal face of God.

14. Faithful to our origins, we are open to collaboration with other branches of the Marist Family whenever this is possible.

15. As members of one human family, reverencing the beauty and integrity of God's creation, we commit ourselves to seek for a more just and compassionate life that respects human rights, especially those of the weakest.

16. We work for the recognition of the dignity of women and their participation in the Church and in all walks of life.

17. We will use our energy as a support and a resource for the development and the full participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Church. The laity have the right through baptism to participate fully in the life and mission of the Church (*1993 General Chapter Statements and Decisions*, 49).

18. Faithful to our vocation we wish to continue to work in all forms of education, especially among the young (*Constitutions* 13). This missionary priority meets a special need in the Church and the world today (*John Paul II to Marist Family*, 17th September, 2001). We seek new and more creative ways of bringing education to youth, experimenting with new methods and forms to educate especially the most disadvantaged. Ever respectful of their freedom, we propose to young people the choice of a deeper religious commitment. This may include the call to religious and/or priestly life as an authentic path for human development.

Goals and Commitments

19. Pastoral planning has become an integral part of the Society's implementation of its mission. Since it is an ongoing process, it remains an essential part of the Society's activity on all levels. Pastoral plans consist of goals – developed by leadership and membership – and the tasks required for the achievement of such goals. They also include other elements, for example:

- a) identifying appropriate forms of expressing the Society's mission in today's world in corporate as well as personal ways;
- b) a realistic assessment of the Society's resources;
- c) the development of tools for critically assessing present ministries in the light of our mission;
- d) an evaluation of our progress in building a communion for mission on the different levels;
- e) an effective way of evaluating leadership on different levels.

The general chapter encourages the superior general and his council to see such pastoral plans are developed, updated and implemented by the provinces, districts and delegations in ways appropriate to the local situation.

20. Community life is a foundation of our mission. Administrations on each level should keep in mind the enormous demographic shifts in the Society. They need to make a concerted effort to integrate younger Marists into communities where there is vitality and where they can be supported in their religious development. This is so important to us that the general chapter asks provinces, districts and delegations to alter their pastoral plans in order to allow for such communities to exist. These communities can also serve to welcome those engaged in some form of Marist vocation discernment.

21. In its statement of mission, the 1985 general chapter called all Marists to give priority to work with the poor. This present chapter asks provinces, districts and delegations to ensure that their pastoral plans contain concrete ways in which Marists can:

- Cbe informed of social issues, thus raising consciousness of the present reality;
- Cbe in direct contact with those who are on the economic margins of society;
- Cbe in solidarity with those who are involved in the struggle for justice.

22. True collaborative ministry is a skill that needs to be learned. Many Marists work in significant collaboration with lay men and women. In their ministries, Marists should collaborate with the laity in such a way that the gifts of all members of the team are recognized and utilized. Evaluation of ministries should include feedback from lay people, especially those who are members of the team.

23. Secondary and tertiary education are works in which Marists are involved with expertise and good results. We experience an urgent call to respond to the needs of those who are economically deprived, and of youths who are neglected at every level of society. We also account for the hope that is in us (*1 Peter* 3:15), offering meaning to the young men and women living in affluent societies. This call should be reflected in our pastoral

planning.

24. We believe that we are called to be instruments of evangelisation in what John Paul II describes in *Redemptoris Missio* as “the new Areopagi” (*Romans 37; Acts 17:22-31*), that is the emerging society and mass media of our contemporary and complex global village. Therefore we insist that the new superior general and his council investigate the possibility of establishing Marist Family collaborative projects to respond to this urgent need.

25. We propose that provinces, districts and delegations, within approximately a year of the close of the general chapter, will develop a plan on how they will implement the decisions and directions of this chapter. These plans, which are part of a continuing process of review and amendment, will be submitted to the superior general and council for further discernment and dialogue.

Conclusion

26. We pledge ourselves in fidelity to our Marist vocation and mission, to our life as religious, and to the consequences this has for individuals and communities. The chapter confirms that our vocation is valid in today’s world. We invite others to join in our life style and mission. The work of our older confreres has created a foundation on which a new generation of Marists can build, while their fidelity continues to encourage the generations that follow them (*Declaration on the Mission of the Society of Mary, 1985, 23*).

27. To all members of the Society of Mary the chapter repeats the words of encouragement spoken by John Paul II at the dawn of the third millennium: “Launch out into the deep!” (*Novo Millennio Ineunte 1; Luke 5: 4*).

CHANGING STRUCTURES

Preamble

28. Changes in structures by themselves are not sufficient to revitalise the Society of Mary. They need to be accompanied by thinking and acting in terms of the whole Society.

The Need for Change

29. The need for some change in the structures of the Society of Mary has been recognized for some time. It is now a matter of urgency. Most recently this change in structures has taken the form of a specific plan for reconfiguration (cf. CS 1997). In the light of this experience the chapter recommends that the superior general and his council continue to work on the structures, principally in order to meet needs such as:

- Cto adapt to challenges posed by diminishing numbers and aging;
- Cto ensure adequate initial formation for candidates;
- Cto facilitate cooperation throughout the Society;
- Cto provide more flexibility in meeting changing needs;
- Cto provide younger Marists with greater opportunities for ministry;
- Cto provide the best possible leadership at all levels.

The Goal

30. The goal of any change in the structures is to promote the growth, development and apostolic activity of the Society of Mary throughout the world so that it can better carry out its purpose in a changing church and a changing world.

Guiding Principles

31. Any change in structures should:
- a) Include sufficient consultation: the process of decision making should involve all

concerned from the beginning.

- b) Be such as to express better the fact that we are a single body.
- c) Maintain an effective balance between central and local authority (*Constitutions* 158, 160, 162).
- d) Be shown to have some benefit for the Society of Mary.
- e) Be tailored to local situations taking into account cultural values and respecting the individuals who will be affected by the change.
- f) Safeguard due representation at chapters.
- g) Simplify administrative structures where possible.

Recommendations

32. All Marists continue to work as a matter of priority on the structures of the Society of Mary.

33. The superior general and council initiate a process that will involve, concurrently, the local, regional and general levels in dialogue with each other.

34. This process includes, where appropriate, assistance from other groups within and outside the Society of Mary.

GOVERNANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

Rationale:

35. The 1993 general chapter called for enhancing teamwork between the superior general and his council, and the major superiors of the Society as an international group and in their regions (*1993 General Chapter Statements and Decisions* 74).

36. The need has become clear for the internationalization of the role and functions of the major superior and the localization of the role and functions of the general and his council.

37. In this highly globalized era, both the local and global must be enhanced in appropriate ongoing structures of dialogue and leadership.

38. Generals and their councillors have expressed frustration often at their inability to mobilize individual major superiors.

39. Some major superiors have expressed frustration that they are not brought into concerns and projects of the general and his council until too late in the process of analysis, evaluation, and recommendation.

40. In order to form an effective international communion for mission, there may be a need to form the major superiors into more of a peer dynamic rather than having the general and his council deal with them one-by-one.

The chapter resolved:

41. That the superior general and the major superiors give serious attention to the possibility of increasing the number of councils of the society before the next general chapter. This will increase communication, collaboration, and co-responsibility for the leadership of the international society. It also includes using consultants if necessary to make these meetings productive and worthwhile for decision making, problem solving, and building communion among the participants.

42. That the superior general and his council take an active role in convening regional meetings of the major superiors if necessary and contributing to the agenda. In

this way the general is informed about particular issues and challenges in the regions, and he has the opportunity to bring the perspective of international leadership to the meetings.

43. That the orientation programs for major superiors provided by the general administration be continued and developed with effective evaluations of the programs. The relationship of the individual major superior with the general administration will be the subject of regular, systematic mutual evaluation and especially at the end of his term of office.

44. That the visitations of individual Marists by the superior general and his council be effectively focused to increase connectedness between Marists at the grassroots of the Society and the Society's general leadership.

FORMATION

45. The chapter extends a word of heartfelt gratitude to all Marists working in the ministry of formation. It is their task to form others into a communion for mission for the sake of Mary's work. The chapter also encourages Marists in formation and recognizes their spirit of vitality and adventure. Their enthusiasm for love and service of God and neighbour reminds the capitulants of their call to become disciples of Jesus in the spirit of Mary. The chapter underlines the importance of the living witness of all confreres, especially of our senior confreres, for the whole area of formation. They remind the Society daily that religious life is not only about success but also about faithfulness. Their witness is a living word of deep and lasting hope for us all.

Declarations

46. The training of formators is an urgent task for the Society of Mary today.

47. The international dimension of formation is an important characteristic of the Society of Mary today. It is a priority of the superior general and his council. It applies to training of formators as well as to Marists preparing for ministry both home and abroad. The next revised edition of the *General Directory of Initial Formation* will contain a section on the international dimension of formation.

48. The chapter affirms that care be taken to respect the principle of subsidiarity in the appointment and preparation of formation personnel (*General Directory of Initial Formation* 26).

49. The chapter encourages local collaboration in the area of vocation education and promotion especially with members of the Marist Family.

50. Post - initial formation is vital in the Society of Mary today (*General Directory of Initial Formation* 142). The chapter recommends that programs of further accompaniment and formation be established for Marists as they enter into ministry.

51. The superior general and council will decide within the next two years the most feasible way to promote Marist research and studies.

52. The superior general and council will decide within the next two years the most feasible way to promote Marist renewal.

53. The superior general and council will continue negotiations with the French province and the wider Society as to the future of La Neylière.

MISSION DISTRICTS

Declarations

54. That the Society of Mary support in solidarity the districts for implantation.
55. That the superior general and his council formulate a mission policy for the Society of Mary to take into account the development of the theology on mission and the practice of mission. This document would be ratified at the following council of the Society.
56. [Such a document would speak of districts and international teams. It would also identify procedures with a view:
a) to evaluating the short and long term objectives of existing districts and international teams, and
b) to provide criteria for the establishment of new districts and international teams].
57. That the superior general and his council be encouraged to establish new districts for implantation, if and when it is practicable.
58. That the superior general and his council continue to accept and invite volunteers for the districts.
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FINANCE

59. The chapter accepts the general bursar's report to the general chapter 2001.
60. While the positions of general bursar and assistant general may be held by the same person (*DC* 1985 78 [2001 92]), they normally should be held by different people.
61. Provinces, districts and delegations send annual financial reports to the general bursar according to a form approved by the superior general and his council (*DC* 1985 110 [2001 124]).
62. The financial resources (wealth and income) of the Society of Mary exist to further its mission. They are to be allocated equitably according to the needs of the community and its mission in each locality.
63. It is the responsibility of the superior general, with his council and general bursar, to ensure the implementation of this policy through a process of fraternal cooperation and consultation with major superiors.
64. Each province, district, or delegation is to have a set of ethical guidelines for its investments. A copy of these guidelines is to be sent to the general bursar's office and reviewed periodically by the superior general and his council.
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INTER-BRANCH COLLABORATION

Regarding Formation

65. The formation of new members of the four branches should include an emphasis on belonging to the Marist Family as part of our identity. It should also include a directive

in this regard, in our respective formation guides, so that, where possible the branches collaborate in formation, and in the long term, our formation programmes might contain a common core (*Recommendation of the respective inter-branch working group, 12th September*).

Regarding Marist Laity

66. In view of enabling ourselves to convey a more coherent vision on the Marist laity, a joint reflection on the original elements of the Marist mission should be encouraged (*Recommendation of the respective inter-branch working group, 12th September*).

Regarding Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

67. The four Marist congregations should undertake a collaborative research project on the possibility of creating a Marist international Non-Government Organization (NGO) accredited to the United Nations in New York (*Recommendation of the respective inter-branch working group, 12th September*).

Proposal from Marist Studies Workshop.

68. A network of inter-congregational Marist studies should be established to make known and to publicize the results of their research in the area of scholarship, history and spirituality (*Proposal from the Marist Studies Workshop in France*).

ELECTIONS

69. On 20 September, in accordance with the legislation of the Society and a chapter-approved *Ordo Electionis*, the capitulants, on the second ballot, elected Fr. Jan Hulshof to be the twelfth superior general of the Society of Mary.

70. On 25 September, upon the presentation of a list of ten candidates by the superior general, the general chapter elected, on separate ballots, the following assistants general:

CFr. Craig Larkin,
CFr. Hubert Bonnet-Eymard,
CFr. Rafaele Qalovi, and
CFr. Paul Frechette.

71. On 26 September, on the first ballot, Fr. Craig Larkin was elected vicar-general of the Society of Mary.

72. On 28 September, in accordance with DC 2001, 62, Fr. Joaquín Fernández, in agreement with the superior general elect, and with the advice of the respective councils, made known to the chapter that the newly elected superior general and council would take up office on 15 December 2001.

CHANGES IN DECRETA CAPITULARIA

Numbers for the following section follow the system found in Decreta Capitularia of the Society of Mary 1985 and amendments made by subsequent chapters. The number in bracket indicates the new numbering as contained in Decreta Capitularia of the Society of Mary 2001.

112-A [1] Everything said of a major superior applies to a provincial, district and delegation superior in their respective areas, unless otherwise indicated in a particular number of the

Decreta Capitularia or in the statutes of districts and delegations approved by the superior general and his council. Further tasks and competences of the district and delegation superior are contained in the statutes of the respective district and delegation. A delegation is a territory where Marists are working directly under the authority and care of the superior general, such territory previously having been a province.

112-B [2] All references to provinces in the *Decreta Capitularia* will be understood as applying to districts and delegations, except where otherwise indicated in a particular number of the *Decreta Capitularia* or in the statutes of each district or delegation.

5 [7] Transfers may be *ad experimentum* for a period of not more than three years, during which the Marist has the rights and obligations of his new province and relinquishes those of his former province. In making the transfer, the superior general will specify whether it is *ad experimentum* or permanent from the beginning. The transfer becomes permanent at the end of the period established by the superior general unless the Marist concerned or his new provincial superior ask that it be revoked.

8-A [11] Before a religious is assigned to the apostolates of another province a written agreement between the two provincials and the religious is generally required. The superior general will assist the provincials in situations they cannot resolve.

8-D [14] Religious will have active and passive voice in the province in whose apostolate they take part. A religious, however, may request to exercise his franchise in his own province according to regulations made by the provincial in the agreement of assignment.

10-A [20] The provincial/district superior is responsible for formation in his own province or district. He and those to whom he entrusts the drawing up and implementation of procedures and programmes will be guided by the General Directory of Initial Formation.

10-B [21] The formation programmes shared by different provinces and/or districts are governed by the general norms of formation in the Society and by an agreement between the participating provinces and/or districts.

10-C [22] International formation programmes are under the responsibility of the superior general. They can be established at the initiative of the general administration or at the request of other major superiors.

12 [24] The direction of the novitiate is the responsibility of the master of novices, under the authority of the competent major superior. The programme for the novitiate requires the approval of the competent major superior and his council.

34 [46] The committee will be composed of three major superiors elected by the council of the Society. Their term of office extends to the next meeting of the council of the Society, and may be renewed. If during this period a member finishes his term as major superior, the superior general and council will appoint another major superior until the next council of the Society. It will meet once a year with the general bursar and the superior general and his council. It may meet more often if it is convoked by the superior general or if all the members agree that such a meeting is necessary.

37 [49] Solidarity in mission

To assist the provinces, delegations or districts needing financial help:

a) the superior general and council, with the general bursar, will invite the superiors of these areas to submit every year a budget with the projected income and expense for the next fiscal year, and the amount they will need from the Mission fund.

b) The superior general and council, with the general bursar, will study the budgets and, in consultation with the superiors concerned, will establish the amount needed for Mission solidarity and its distribution to each area.

c) The superior general and council, with the general bursar, will send this information to the major superiors – and where appropriate to the mission promoter – of provinces and delegations with the ability to help, with a proposal of how much they might contribute. The major superiors, in consultation with the mission promoters, will give a response regarding the ability to meet the request. The superior general and council, with the general bursar, will ask them to send the monies to the central Mission Fund, from which the funds will be distributed to each area according to a previously agreed schedule.

39 [51] Each province and district will elect one delegate to the general chapter for the first twenty to fifty (20-50) perpetually professed members, another delegate for the second fifty (51-100) perpetually professed members, and so forth. The basis for calculating the number of elected delegates will be the number of perpetually professed Marists who have active voice in a province/district at the date of the convocation of the chapter. Each delegation will elect two delegates to the general chapter. If there are fewer than 20 perpetually professed members in a delegation at the time of the convocation of the chapter, the delegation will elect one delegate only from among its members.

45 ii b-c [57 f] to advise on the policy of solidarity inside and outside the Society, on the establishment of the amount of the Roman Contribution, and on the financial help of the missionary projects of the Society.

49 [61] In the general chapter the assistants general will be elected upon presentation of at least two names for each assistancy by the superior general elect. Before submitting these names, the superior general elect will consult with members of the general chapter according to a formula decided by the chapter. When assistants are elected at a council of the Society, the superior general will submit at least two names for each assistancy and will consult with the members of the council of the Society according to a formula decided by the council of the Society.

51-A [63] The newly elected superior general and council take up office within the three months after the conclusion of the general chapter, at a date agreed upon and published to the chapter by the outgoing superior general and his successor with the advice of their respective councils.

58 a [72 a] they examine the programmes of formation in the Society, assess their implementation, and approve the local directories of initial formation (cf 85, i);

59 g [73 h] approval of local directories of initial formation;

60 g [74 g] acceptance of a request to work as a missionary outside the province of origin and/or to work in a district;

64 [78] The offices of secretary general, general bursar, and procurator to the Holy See may be held concurrently. They may be held by assistants general. Their term of office is four years, twice renewable.

75 b [89 b] election of officers as determined by provincial/district legislation;

78 [92] The election of the provincial superior will include the following norms:
a) within the limits set by the *Constitutions*, the provincial chapter will determine who enjoys active and passive voice, the procedure and the number of stages of the election process, when and how a religious can withdraw his name from the list of candidates;
b) at the stage determined by the provincial chapter, each religious will offer names in order of preference and these names will be sent to the superior general and his council for the *nihil obstat*. Provincial chapters may decide that the votes at this stage be counted by the election committee in the province and the results sent to

the superior general and council.

c) the superior general will notify the election committee of the names of candidates receiving the largest number of votes and to whom he gives the *nihil obstat* after consultation with the incumbent provincial superior and the religious concerned.

84 j [101 e] give permission to a Marist to undertake a task or mission outside the Society;

86 h [100 h] granting *absentia a domo* for up to one year for sufficient reasons. When there are reasons of health, studies, or a special apostolate in the name of the Society, he can grant permission for longer than one year;

87 d [101 d] presentation to the bishop of parish priests and assistants for parishes entrusted to the Society.

ENABLING LEGISLATION

113 [127] In accordance with the motu proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae* (nn. 6-7), the general chapter gives to the council of the Society and, when this is not in session, to the superior general and his council, until the next general chapter, the following powers concerning all our legislation:

- a) to supply, in cases of necessity, for the lacunae and incoherencies which may occur;
- b) to take decisions in all cases where doubt arises;
- c) in special cases, and for sufficient reasons, to dispense from any particular provision;
- d) in exceptional cases, where experience shows that certain provisions are impossible to apply or prejudice the common good, to suspend their application and take other measures.

114 [128] The general chapter authorizes provincials, with the consent of their councils, to establish temporary norms to give effect to changes made in legislation by this general chapter. These temporary norms will be submitted to the superior general and his council for approval.

Apart from the above changes, all the other decreta of the 1985 and 1993 general chapters remain in force.