



CABRINI WORLD HIGHLIGHTS

Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus | General Chapter 2022 Special Edition | www.cabriniworld.org



XVI General Chapter

Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
Rome, June 26 - July 22

The General Chapter officially began on June 26 with the Opening Mass presided over by **Monsignor Rino Fisichella**, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization. It was concelebrated by Fr. Nibin Palatty and Fr. Perumay, Vocationist Fathers from the parish of San Gabriele in viale Cortina d'Ampezzo, the parish of the sisters living in the Curia. The Celebration was animated by the student Choir of the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome and was broadcasted live on YouTube. You can watch it at [this link](#). During his homily, Monsignor Fisichella reminded us of how Mother Cabrini called us to the missionary spirit to proclaim the Gospel. He also encouraged us to live the days of the General Chapter by listening to the Word of God and the sisters.

The first week of the Chapter was dedicated to presentations and reports on the work carried out throughout the Institute during the last eight years. On June 28, the General Superior, Sr. Barbara Staley, shared her report on the state of the Institute. The next day, June 29, Sr. Stella Maris Elena, General Treasurer, presented the Financial Report, in collaboration with Mr. Greg Lane, Chief Financial Officer in Chicago. Mr. Greg also illustrated the use of the Institute's material assets, including Impact Investing.



CASA LA SALLE

The General Chapter was held at Casa La Salle, Rome. The house is located on Via Aurelia and immersed in the tranquility of a large private park, a few kilometers from the Vatican City .



THE LOGO AND THE THEME

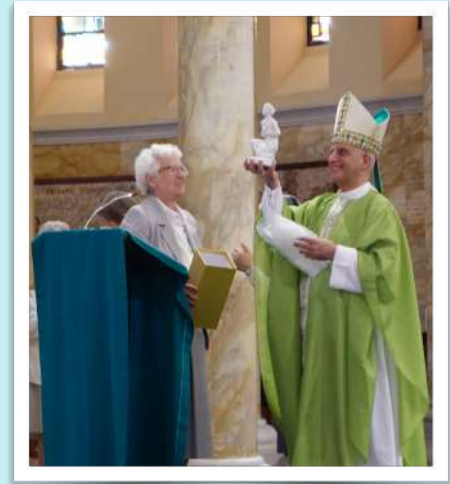
The theme chosen for the Chapter, Free yourselves and put on wings, is based on the writings by Saint Frances Cabrini. It was an invitation to face the challenges of our time with audacity and passion.

MONSIGNOR RINO FISICHELLA'S HOMILY

Mother Cabrini, listening to the spirit speaking through her, deeply understood her life as a missionary; China was her dream, but in obedience to the Pope she went and then "not to the East but to the West", but always a missionary. You cannot fail in this charism that belongs to you: evangelizer women who evangelize, with all that this entails, with the strength, the novelty, the typical perceptive sensitivity of women in proclaiming the Gospel, in being together with Jesus, in overcoming limitations, in healing diseases.

Mother Cabrini began to give concrete signs of evangelization with through education and hospitals. Through each one with one and the other, she put into practice what we have heard: cast out demons, the devil enemy of ignorance and heal the infirm. The announcement becomes visible through the concrete signs, not just the words. The Word is inevitably united to the sign and the sign explains the Word; it makes you understand, it gives intelligence to the Word and here you see Jesus calling His disciples to a place apart. These are the days when you are estranged take space apart from your daily work to plan the years to come. Let it be a work lived together with Jesus, in communion of life with Him, trying first of all to listen, first of all to listen to God when He speaks, because God speaks but requires the listening, and in order to listen we must be silent. Live these days with a great moment significant spaces of silence, to listen to God and, if you listen to God, you also listen to your sisters. May these days be a moment of mutual listening.

Monsignor Rino Fisichella, Opening Mass of the General Chapter, June 26, 2022



The three Provinces, Mater Gratiae, Guadalupe and Santa Francesca Cabrini, along with the Holy Spirit Region, presented their report on the activities they have carried out since the last Chapter. Each reality highlighted the progress made and the challenges to be faced. Furthermore, we were able to



From the left: Sr. Joan McGlinchey, Sr. Lucy Panettieri and Sr. Sharon Casey.

appreciate a presentation by Sr. Albertina Ghislieri Goulart MSC, who shared the experience of the mission in Uganda. It was so exciting to see all the strides made on this mission over a short period of time and during the Covid pandemic .

On June 30, sisters and laity followed the presentation of the International Health Commission's report, facilitated by Sr. Concepción Vallecillo, one of the Chapter delegates. The other members of the Commission added their contribution through a video presentation that recalled Mother Cabrini's dream and the origin of the Cabrini mission in health care.

Finally, on July 11, we were able to deepen our work and understanding by listening to the report of the International Formation Coordinating Team (IFCT). The IFCT sisters shared their experience of working in the team and were open to our questions.

During the first two weeks, sisters and lay people could ask for clarification and discuss openly each of the presentations made during the Chapter's sessions.

Starting from the third week, after the return home of the lay participants, we addressed the theme of the possible modifications to the Institute's Constitutions. Sr. Joan McGlinchey presented the report on the work done by the team, with the contribution of Sr. Melanie Di Pietro, SC.

We also started the process of elaborating the Theological Reflection, Mandates and Recommendations on Formation, Vocation, Mission and Government for the next six years. This work of drafting the Mandates and Recommendations continued throughout the week. These were days of intense, enriching work, and we were able to glimpse the relevant aspects to formulate what our "being and doing" as missionaries will be for the future. We used a methodology that allowed us to be all involved in this work. We have also sought common paths and planned in a synodal and interconnected style between MSCs, lay people and recipients of our mission in the world.



Sr. Barbara Staley hands over the light to Sr. Maria Eliane Azevedo Da Silva soon after her election as General Superior of the MSCs.

The third week was a time of discernment and prayer, which began with the election of the General Superior followed by the election of the General Council.

Sr. Maria Eliane Azevedo Da Silva was elected General Superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The elected General Council, which will work with her to give life to the mandates outlined during this time, is formed by: Sr. Stella Maris Elena, former General Treasurer, Sr. Gilda Mendoza and Sr. Patricia Godoy.



The General Council immediately after the election. From left: Sr. Patricia Godoy, Sr. Gilda Mendoza, Sr. Maria Eliane Azevedo Da Silva (General Superior) and Sr. Stella Maria Elena (former General Councilor)

We dedicated some time to appreciate the work done by Sr. Barbara Staley and her General Council and to celebrate the newly elected sisters. We thank God for the gift and availability of our sisters to serve the Institute by guiding it in the mission of bringing the love of Jesus to the ends of the Earth.

During the last week of the General Chapter, we were engaged in the revision and approval of the Theological Reflection, Mandates and

Recommendations for the areas of Mission, Vocation, Formation, Government, Constitutions and Statutes. Lastly, Sr. Concepcion Vallecillo presented a work of the analysis of the current context and

the reality of the Institute, prepared for the General Chapter in collaboration with Mrs. Nicole Rose.

Guided by the spirit of Mother Cabrini and in communion among us, we concluded the Chapter by signing the letter in which we commit to live the charism in a synodal style, guided by this inspiring horizon: *“we form a global, ecclesial and inclusive community, continuing the legacy of Mother Cabrini, to respond to the emerging challenges in the field of education, health and social service, through responsible actions in favor of the human dignity of every person in every continent where we are inserted”*

(from the commitment letter of the XVI General Chapter of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus).



The outgoing General Council. From left: Sr. Maria Regina Canale, Sr. Barbara Staley, Sr. Stella Maris Elena and Sr. Bernadette Anello.

FATHER LEONIR CHIARELLO'S HOMILY

As Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you are invited to remind the world that the Risen Lord is still present and that He reminds us and carries us in His heart. In harmony with the phrase of St. Frances Cabrini that you have chosen to guide the work of your General Chapter “Free yourselves and put on wings” to see again and let yourselves be seen again, to recognize and let yourselves be recognized and to remember and let yourselves be remembered by Jesus, the Risen Lord. Precisely in this perspective of remembering, of bringing back to the heart, as a Scalabrinian missionary, we want as a Scalabrinian family to bring back to the heart Cabrinians and Scalabrinians, to bring back to the heart the collaboration of Mother Cabrini with our blessed founder who will shortly be proclaimed Saint, we want to remember their collaboration in the face of the urgent needs of migrants. They met and saw, recognized and committed themselves to the situations of need of migrants at the end of the nineteenth century and, through their works, their personal commitment and also with the institutions they set up, they promoted evangelization and social action, to eradicate the darkness of the tomb they were in. Using the image of Mary who seeks Jesus and cries because Jesus is in the tomb, they saw, they were moved, they cried but they worked hard to give an answer and even today we are invited to renew this collaboration, our commitment to collaboration to alleviate the material and spiritual wounds of many brothers and sisters forced to live far from their homeland, to support their rights, to keep their Christian faith alive and to raise the international community's awareness of an open and supportive welcome. May the Lord then support you and support us in our mission to bring Him to the world, to remind the world that He is present in many situations that are in the darkness, but He is present as the Risen One.

Father Leonir Chiarello, Closing Mass of the General Chapter, July 22, 2022



On July 22, we officially concluded the Chapter with the **Liturgy** at 5 pm, which was live streamed and presided over by **Fr. Leonir Chiarello, General Superior of the Missionaries of San Carlo (Scalabrinians)**, together with Fr. Robert Kannathanath, SDV, associate pastor of the Generalate parish, the Church of St. Gabriel the Archangel and general secretary of the Vocationist Fathers. We once again thanked Sr. Barbara Staley and her Council for the work done in these eight years and we continue to support the new General Superior and her Council with our prayers. A big thank you also to all the sisters and to those who participated and made this Chapter possible!

SHARINGS AND TESTIMONIES

Co-responsible for Mission

Since the beginning of the General Chapter, the facilitator, Mr. Mark Davis, guided us in answering these questions: who we are; where and in what ways do we operate; and what is our desire for this very particular moment of the Institute.

We shared in small groups and later in plenary our feelings, hopes and concerns for the work done in the Provinces and the Region. The laity were invited to dialogue about the needs concerning their formation, while the sisters met to discuss specific aspects of religious life. Sisters and lay people had moments in which they shared some life stories.

This time gave us the opportunity to see even more the witness of the laity in sharing the experience of our Charism, expressed in the various missions: with the homeless, with migrants at the border between Mexico and Texas, in educational pastoral care, in the time of Covid-19, in promoting human dignity. In all this, we perceive the merciful love and compassion of the Cabrinian charism.



The MSCs at Casa La Salle during one of the weekends of the General Chapter.

On July 7 and 8, the Chapter participants, sisters and laity, shared the question: What have we



Sisters and Laity during a moment of prayer.

discovered from all that has been said so far during the Chapter? What have we heard that we consider particularly important for the future of the Institute and its global mission? At each table, key issues for the Institute and the Mission were proposed, seeking to clarify the priorities for our further reflections and discussions. The first afternoon session focused on Being Cabrinian today: what



MR. CHRIS
LOWNEY

are the essential characteristics that identify our missionary activities, wherever they are, as Cabrinian? Subsequently, the Chapter Assembly asked itself, in light of the signs of the times, what are the urgent needs of today and of our reality: Where is God calling us now? This helped us contemplate and give voice to our Mission Priorities.

We then talked about the value of co-responsibility and walking together. Later, we shared how the Cabrinian charism gives us hope and faith in our journey together. We dedicated this day to building the vision, mission and the mission priorities of the Institute.



FATHER MARIANO
SERRA

PRAYER

Discern the Voice of the Spirit

Every day of the General Chapter was opened by a common prayer in the Chapter Hall, from 8.30 to 9 am. The prayer was led each day by a member of the Liturgy Commission.

Each day, at 12.15 pm, we had the gift of celebrating the Eucharist, always in a different language. For this we thank all the priests who were available during the month to do this service to all the Chapter’s participants. Several moments were dedicated to personal prayer and discernment, both personal and community. In particular, we took some time of silence before the elections of the new General Superior and the General Council.

At the beginning of the Chapter, we received a spiritual diary developed by the facilitator, a tool for our personal prayer, which we were able to use throughout the Chapter. Being centered on Jesus in prayer allowed us not to be caught up in ideas alone, but to live for the common good and the mission with the most vulnerable.

The Liturgy Commission was formed by Sr. Ines Caixeta, Sr. Assunta Scopelliti, Sr. Laura Sanchez, Sr. Sharon Casey.



SR. NEUSA DE FÁTIMA
MARIANO



SR. MERCEDES
CASAS SÁNCHEZ



From left: Sr. Laura Sanchez, Sr. Asnakech Assefa Dana, Sr. Hana Dimma, Sr. Genet Henok, Sr. Maureen Bennett, Sr. Suany Angela De Oliveira.

FORMATION

Co-responsible for Mission

The General Chapter was enriched not only by the participating sisters and lay people, but also by the presence of some speakers. These guests held some formation sessions in the first two weeks and contributed to the study and meditation on some specific themes.

With **Chris Lowney**, writer, public speaker and leadership consultant, we worked on Discernment. Thanks to his guidance, we recognized that we live in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world (VUCA), a world that confronts us with various challenges. The reflection on Discernment was instead guided by the examination of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Chris emphasized identifying what our consolations and desolations are, encouraging us to move forward, like Saint Frances Cabrini, unloading our unhealthy baggage and recognizing that we are all responsible for the mission, regardless of our role and where we come from. We reflected and discussed on our co-responsibility for the mission. He guided us in individual and collective activities, so that we would reflect on the characteristics of good leadership, willing to always think about the whole group. Chris reminded us of the call of Pope Benedict XVI, who stressed that the laity must be co-responsible for the well-being and the mission of the Church. In deepening the co-responsibility for mission, we discovered that they are more than collaborators; hence, the need to appropriate the Cabrinian charism and spirituality, in order to be deeply connected with the mission.

These activities led us to conclude that we must continue to grow in trust between sisters and laity. A deep spiritual formation is needed for our committed lay people, to ensure that the Cabrinian culture takes root. It is important that the laity have the formation and information needed to truly contribute to the mission and that their potentialities and abilities are valued.

As for the religious, we had the honor of hosting **Father Mariano Sedano Sierra**, a Claretian Missionary, who gave us spiritual input, delving into the call of the mission. He encouraged us to consider the pandemic as a moment of grace, to look at things with eyes open, to go from the superficial to a greater depth, and to follow the example of Mother Cabrini, who had such tranquility in her heart that she could do so much. He underlined how we too are called to immerse ourselves in God's love, as our Foundress did. Only love can heal our loneliness. Father Mariano spoke of Agape, selfless love, love for the sake of love. He suggested that we do an exercise with the Word: to change the words of St. Paul's Hymn of Charity from "Charity is patient, charity is kind..." to "Jesus is patient, Jesus is

CELEBRATIONS AND FEASTS

JUNE 26: Opening Celebration of the General Chapter.

JULY 4: Independence Day of the United States of America.

JULY 5: Cultural evening where we shared typical food, dances and songs from different countries.



JULY 7: Canonization of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini.

JULY 8: Farewell ceremony of the laity participating in the Chapter.

JULY 15: Anniversary of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini's birth.

JULY 19: Celebrations for the election of the General Superior and the General Council.

JULY 21: Birthday of Sr. Stella Maris Elena, General Councilor.

JULY 22: Farewell ceremony and Closing Mass of the General Chapter .



kind...” to see who Jesus is for us and to help us fulfill our call to be like Him.

He underlined the words of Mother Cabrini that we must work with love, to reach out to others. Mother Cabrini understood flights as entering into our depths, exiting from ourselves, passing from passive to active attitudes, to live God’s passion, to fly high! The dynamics of mission call us not to be superficial, but to ask ourselves: *What does the mission ask of me? Die to myself! Let God be God! Being true missionaries is not only what we get rid of, but what we fill ourselves with, is emptying ourselves and being filled with the graces of God!*



Sisters and Laity in one of the work sessions led by Mr. Chris Lowney.

On June 29, we welcomed **Sr. Neusa de Fátima Mariano**, General Superior of the **Scalabrinian Sisters**, who told us about the inter-congregational project of welcoming refugee women and children into our community in via della Pineta Sacchetti, 506. Speaking about inter-congregational experiences, Sr. Neusa stressed that this helps us to revitalize our charism, that it opens us to the service of migrants and refugees, to make us stronger. What moves us are the spirituality and charism of Cabrini and Scalabrini. She said that those who got out of human trafficking networks are also welcomed into the facility.



Mrs. Ana Teresa Ramos with Sr. Gilda Mendoza.

pastoral care as an expert in caring for migrants. She presented the theme: We are Mission, underlining how mission is key to consecrated life. Through her advice and quoting the document *Evangelii Gaudium* on several occasions, she showed us that both sisters and laity are consecrated by Baptism, and that our charism remains alive and active, because it is a gift from God, which we must proclaim boldly and creatively.

On July 5, **Sr. Mercedes Casas Sánchez**, of the Congregation of the **Daughters of the Holy Spirit**, was with us. Sr. Mercedes was president of the CLAR (Latin American Conference of Religious) and currently collaborates with the Dicastery for Religious Life at the Vatican, as well as in



Sr. Pietrina Raccuglia and Mrs. Sue Williams.

EXCURSIONS AND LEISURE TIME

The joy of being together

The General Chapter was also an opportunity to spend some free time together and enjoy the company of Sisters and lay people who came to Rome from all over the world.

The first weekend was very intense and beautiful. Some sisters and lay people went on a trip to the **Royal Palace of Caserta**, Campania. With the help of a guide, we walked around the beautiful gardens,

which are known all over the world. We had a lot of fun together! On Sunday, July 3, at Casa La Salle, many lay people from the Cabrini world were interviewed, as part of a project of collecting testimonies that the Institute is working on and that will be used to promote vocations in the Institute. The weekend of July 16 and 17 was full of initiatives. On Saturday, thirty-two sisters and laity visited the Umbrian town of **Orvieto**, while on Sunday morning some sisters were in St. Peter's Square in Rome for the **Angelus of Pope Francis**, who addressed a special greeting to us Missionaries of the Sacred Heart on the occasion of the General Chapter.

During the three Sundays of the Chapter, after the departure of the laity, some MSCs were interviewed and told their story. These interviews are part of the **Oral History project** that the Institute has been carrying out for months, to collect the extraordinary life testimonies of the MSCs.

Every Wednesday and Sunday evening, throughout the month, we gathered for the **Movie Nights**, which are some first results of the Oral History project. Every evening, we were able to watch and hear the stories of one or two elderly Sisters of the Institute, already interviewed over the past months in different parts of the world. We continued to enrich ourselves with their life stories and the testimony of their religious life at the service of the Institute.



MSCs at Pope Francis' Angelus in St. Peter's Square.

MR. MARK DAVIS, GENERAL CHAPTER FACILITATOR

Mark is an internationally experienced consultant, facilitator and formator who has been working for over thirty years in a wide variety of ecclesial and professional contexts. In addition to working as a facilitator of Chapter meetings of religious orders, he has also been a consultant for the development of various dioceses, religious orders and religious organizations in the UK, Ireland and Australia. An established author, he continues to offer professional formation on groups' facilitation.

The central element of his work is creating interpersonal environments where grace conversations can take place. In recent times, this approach has proven to be very useful to faith-based organizations, with increasingly heterogeneous circles, that wish to explore the heritage and legacy of their foundation.





Sisters and lay people on trip to the Royal Palace of Caserta, Campania.

“In this XVI General Chapter, we experienced God’s call to be instruments of peace and love. We walk together and commit ourselves to show the world that we form a global, inclusive, ecclesial, synodal community. We believe that one of the pillars of this journey is listening and welcoming, and the co-responsibility among Sisters, between Sisters and Lay People, among Lay People. A new journey of the Holy Spirit began with Mother Cabrini. A new beginning for us today, in search of a unity that requires an inner and outer transformation. A fresh start to embrace our vulnerabilities and lovingly serve the most vulnerable ones by responding to the emerging challenges of today’s world.”

~ Message by the General Superior at the conclusion of the XVI General Chapter of the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

THE GENERAL SUPERIOR

SR. MARIA ELIANE AZEVEDO DA SILVA MSC was born on May 20, 1960 in the city

of Serranos, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. She attended the normal teacher training course in a private Catholic school in the city of Rio de Janeiro. She worked as a primary school teacher at the same school before choosing the religious life. She entered the Institute of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as an aspirant on January 13, 1982, in the city of Vassouras, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She professed her Perpetual Vows on December 5, 1992, in the city of Rio Pomba, in the state of Minas Gerais. She has a degree in Pedagogy, postgraduate studies in School Administration, a degree in Psychology and a Master in Religious Sciences. She worked in catechesis, in youth and vocation ministry, as a teacher of religious education, in school ministry and teacher formation, as a consultant to the Religious Conference of Sao Paulo and Catholic schools, as a clinical psychologist, as an administrative and pedagogical director, in strategic planning, as a general director of the Cabrini school network in Brazil, as a provincial councilor and secretary, as a provincial superior and president of the Madre Cabrini Association.

Today, her commitment is to serve and love the GLOBAL COMMUNION between sisters and lay people who are co-responsible for Cabrini mission. She is committed and devoted to the charism of Mother Cabrini in the Church and in Society, in the process of carrying out the Chapter mandates over the next six years, doing everything for the greater Glory of God and the sake of humanity.



THE GENERAL COUNCIL

SR. STELLA MARIS ELENA MSC was born on July 21, 1950 in Rosario, in the province of Santa Fe, Republic of Argentina. She entered the Institute on 7 March 1990. She is a teacher, a catechist for children, teenager and young people and has a psycho-pedagogical and religious science education. She was a teacher for twenty years at the *Mother Cabrini School* in Rosario; a Director and legal Representative of the various educational Centers in Argentina; a Regional Superior for three terms; and a General Assistant for Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. For the last six years, she was the General Treasurer. Her commitment, on the basis of her experience in the previous administration, is also to bring to the General Council everything she can so that the Institute can serve the Church with its Missions, contribute to the salvation of souls and give glory to God with every activity.



SR. PATRICIA GODOY MSC was born in a small town called Cruz del Eje, in the province of Cordoba, Argentina, on June 18, 1978. She joined the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in March 2000. She began her experience in the community of the elderly Sisters of Buenos Aires and after a year she moved to the house of formation of Our Lady of Lujan, also in Buenos Aires, where she studied theology. Her first mission as a Junior in 2005 was at the Cabrini School of Villa Amelia. Later she went to the Mother Cabrini boarding school in Rosario. In 2015, she professed her Perpetual Vows. From 2016 until today, her main mission has been formation, accompanying the life of our sisters and candidates in the Holy Spirit Region. She has spent these years between Ethiopia and London. Today, her commitment to make the Institute a Global Community is to be "courageous" and to walk the path of cooperation in the mission with generosity.



SR. GILDA MENDOZA MSC was born in Guatemala City on June 9, 1953. On January 4, 1975 she began her novitiate in Guatemala, where she stayed until 1979. In 1984 she spent 9 months in Italy and Spain to prepare for her Perpetual Profession, which took place on December 8, 1985 in Guatemala, where she stayed until 2019. Subsequently she spent a year in Guatemala, Italy and the United States. In 2020 and 2021, she was engaged in an itinerant mission in the communities of Guatemala, Nicaragua and Mexico. In December 2021, she was transferred to the Spirituality Center of Codogno, Italy. She graduated in Educational Sciences with a specialization in Pedagogy and was a primary and secondary school teacher, a secretary, a didactic teacher, a Deputy Director, a primary and secondary school Director. Over the years, she has served as Community Superior, Community and Region Bursar, Councilor and Regional Superior. Her commitment to make the Institute a Global Community will be to put in a great diligence to cooperate and strengthen communication, bonds of communion, fraternity and closeness between all the sisters and the laity.



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