



DAILY REPORT

1 May 2022

Day 1

The joy of the encounter, the embraces of old acquaintances and those new to get to know, filled the corridors of the Generalate in Rome. This atmosphere has been *in crescendo* since the last days and the different languages augur that, as at Pentecost, in spite of the differences, or rather, thanks to them, we will understand each other and the General Chapter has begun.

The first day started at 9:00 a.m. with a prayer and the singing of the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* in the Aula Magna of the Generalate and at exactly 10:25 a.m., after the Capitulants had received their certificates, signed the acts and heard the welcome remarks of Brother Robert Schieler, Superior General, the 46th General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was opened.

At the end of the morning, the members of the Preparatory Commission presented their work which highlighted the inspiration to build something new; hence the Chapter was planned in Pataya, Thailand. It was agreed that it would last only three weeks in order to push the Capitulants to be concrete and use all the theory already written to make the Chapter's theme a reality: Building new paths to transform lives.

At the beginning of the Chapter two Brothers were missing: one Brother from Poland, who due to flight problems arrived late in the afternoon, and a Brother from Vietnam who is waiting for a visa, as the Brother elected cannot attend for health reasons.

There is an atmosphere of fraternity and the Capitulants are already showing through their conversations in the corridors that they are very intelligent, capable and religious people. Among them there are several with extensive experience and others who are new faces and newcomers to this type of assembly, which generates an amalgam of possibilities. Also present were several women representing the women's communities of the Lasallian Family and some of the international leaders of the International Council of the Lasallian Educational Mission and the Secretariat of Association. There are those with whom to make a good Chapter: history will tell if this was true!

Sister Leslie Sándigo, Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, General Councillor of that congregation, who will guide the Chapter participants in the development of



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the methodology, began her work in the afternoon of this first day by proposing to the Brothers a work of group building. We are almost a hundred people and among new faces, different origins and languages, it is necessary to create the confidence to listen, dialogue, debate and decide in the coming days.

The Capitulants arrived in Rome a few days ago and that means that they bring with them not only hours of flying and tiredness but also the natural and psychological fatigue of sharing with about 100 other people who speak other languages and see the world in different ways. However, this diversity is part of the value of our Institute.

At the end of the afternoon, those responsible for communications asked for a moment to take the first group photo in front of the main entrance of the House and while this was happening and a drone was flying over the heads of the maximum expression of the communion of the Institute, a priest arrived at the gate of the House, opened the door, entered and waited there patiently behind the cameras, and then at the end of the recordings, most of the Brothers realised that this priest was Cardinal Michael F. Czerny, Prefect of the Dicastery for Integral Human Development and who had arrived by public transport from Rome and who a few minutes later would be celebrating the Eucharist in the sanctuary of St. John Baptist de La Salle sharing some profound insights in a homily, very much in Jesuit style and where he reminded us of the meaning of human fraternity and other ideas from the Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti and the need to be shepherds with the smell of the sheep.

The day ended with a fraternal Italian dinner hosted by Brother Superior General and his Council.

The Chapter started well. The Institute needs people who are daring, intelligent and evangelical! And here in Rome, at the 46th General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, they are present, there is hope, there is energy! We are in Chapter.

By Br. Jorge Alexánder González Morales, FSC
Chronicler day 1.