

10th GENERAL CHAPTER of the Congregation of Our
Lady, CSA

LOCQUIREC

14th July – 5th August 2014

ACTS OF THE CHAPTER



*Pour un monde nouveau,
Va, fais-Le grandir !*

REVITALISING COMMUNITY LIFE

'This is how we share in the Church's mission of promoting unity, justice and charity throughout the human family' (Constitutions, 8)

Our Convictions:

'Our life in community and our mission spring from a single source' (Const. 7)

In Jesus Christ we become *'truly sisters of one another and members of one body'* (Const. 7; 1640 Constitutions, Part 2, VII, 2).

In our relationships, each one of us should have at heart *'to follow Our Lord ... during his earthly life'* (Introduction to 1984 Constitutions, Spirituality, p.2)

Alix wanted a new Congregation to do all the good possible. Today our Congregation *'is expanding to become an extended family'*. With our Associates, our professional fellow-workers, our families and friends, we have embarked on a common mission.

Our life together is imbued with the Word of God and the legacy of our founders: Alix Le Clerc, Peter Fourier, the Rule of St Augustine, the Constitutions – and with the needs of today's world.

In the Congregation today, new forms of communal life exist: e.g. living alone but linked by networks; living separately within the same complex; living together with lay-people or in inter-congregational fraternities. They are signs of an extension of community life with all the demands, the mutual support and the joy set in motion by the earliest Christian communities.

'Keep yourselves always in the greatest possible unity, practising charity amongst yourselves, because charity and union are the only ways of preserving the Congregation' Alix Le Clerc

Our Desires:

a) For the Word of God and today's world to shape even more the prayer, apostolate, community life and personal life of each and every sister; for the Word of God to be meditated on in our personal prayer, shared in community or with others, and received in the Eucharist

b) For our relationship with God, with other people, with ourselves and with creation to become ever deeper: *'the essential element is the quality of the relationships which unite us all'* (Const. 13)

- c) For our communal life, lived out in '*freedom and truth, mutual trust and joy, sharing all we possess*' (cf. Const. 13), but also in sharing in each other's troubles, to be a hallmark of our Congregation
- d) For each one to take responsibility for building up community life, including mutual forgiveness
- e) For us to recognise our differences as a strength and an asset
- f) For us all to become ever more united in one and the same apostolic impetus (Const 12), and for our communal life to bear witness to our desire for unity and solidarity in a world which is sometimes violent and individualistic
- g) For our communities to be welcoming and open so as to help the growth of fellowship between all
- h) For our communal life to be enriched by the international dimension of the Congregation

Our Proposals

1. Being creative in praying and studying the Word of God in community or with other groups
2. Some non-negotiable attitudes in our life within the Congregation:
 - respect, listening and dialogue
 - speech that builds up by being direct and honest. Being positive and accepting challenges as opportunities for finding alternative solutions
 - times and places of silence to allow what we say to mature
 - community life and mission (mission includes responsibilities within the Congregation):
 - a) each one recognises that she is sent, having received her mission from her Vicariate or Delegation, or from the Congregation.
 - b) each one takes seriously finding time to share what she is doing with her community
 - c) the community encourages, supports, challenges and keeps in its prayers the mission of each one of its members.

Steps to be Taken

1. Times for reviewing the way we pray, individually and together, in the light of the **Word of God** are to be programmed in at every level: Generalate, Vicariate, Delegation, Group or Community.

2. Times for reviewing **our life together** are to be programmed in, so that we are aware of what builds it up and what destroys it (indifference, lack of dialogue, failure to resolve conflicts, cliques, etc.).
 - fix times for exchanges within Vicariates, Delegations, Groups and Networks in order to share **our mission** which is an integral part of our life together. Invite others capable of helping us to have a wider view of the world in order to achieve our task.
 - encourage exchanges (visits, passing on news, writing letters etc.) between North and South, South and South, East and West, in order to have a better idea of the contexts in which our sisters live.

3. Go on learning how to practise the technique of 'Constructive Communication'.

4. Study and put into practise the Augustinian spirit of community life.

OUR MISSION: 'Go, Make Him Grow'¹

Our Convictions:

In order to bring new life to our mission, we need to go out to the 'periphery'² speaking a language adapted to our times; lay-people too share in this mission.

Our Desires and Proposals:

Motivated by the chapter on Apostolic Life in our Constitutions (1-6):

In order to go to the 'periphery':

1. Take the time to come close to, to 'be with' ... whoever comes our way, including in the street, or on the internet.³
2. Learn to receive, and to change our outlook (we grow while helping others grow).
3. Share our relish for life with young people and with adults:
 - people who say 'it's all rubbish!' and who think 'I'm rubbish!'
 - those without landmarks, with no self-esteem
 - those for whom money is the only value; for whom individualism or self-absorption is the only possible attitude
 - all those who have to struggle just to survive.
4. Take care of creation. Defend and promote life, especially that of women and children.
5. All this applies equally to being in schools or to participating in networks.⁴

With a Language for our Time: 'to build relationships which free people and encourage their personal growth' (Const. 51).

1. Our way of talking is sometimes a 'foreign' language, especially on ethical questions. We take for granted our socio-cultural, ecclesial and biblical vocabulary ... and the reality is quite different. What kind of 'constructive communication' can we find?

2. Members of the Congregation are invited to get involved with Facebook or Twitter – or equivalents – with the help of a technical team.

¹ Cf. Alix's vision of receiving the child Jesus from Our Lady's hands (Relation, 23).

² Cf. demand of Pope Francis to leave our 'sacristies' for the 'periphery'.

³ Cf. Alix's vision of the 'wisps of straw' (Relation, 47).

⁴ E.g. Avaaz.org; 'Um grito pela vida'; 'Empower Women'; Commission for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC); other commissions set up by Conferences of Religious; New Evangelisation; inter-religious dialogue ...

Steps to be Taken

In order to go out to the 'periphery':

1. In the setting of First Formation programmes, numerous initiatives already exist in all our countries.⁵

In Brazil, 'we wish to increase our presence on the periphery by setting up a community on the borders of Brazil, Colombia and Peru ... and even by moving outside Brazil altogether.'

2. In all our countries: we already belong to organisations, or try to encourage actions which will contribute towards the protection of the environment (e.g. 'eco-schools'): NGOs; networks for the protection and defence of human rights.⁶

We want to take a significant further step: according to possibilities and to local conditions, we could perhaps give priority to participating⁷ in movements to combat all forms of bullying and of human trafficking (women, children, organs, etc.).

3. While recognising the numerous commitments of members of the Congregation, we invite each one to find ways of 'going out of herself', of developing inter-personal relationships, in order to make even closer contact, to be even more 'with' others; cf. Peter Fourier: 'for the salvation of souls, one must be ready to walk barefoot through the streets, corns and all'.

With a language for our time:

1. We want training in 'constructive communication' to imbue every part of the Congregation by being made known in Vicariates, Delegations and Groups.

2. We want to have a team of experts to help us create a Facebook page or a Blog linked to the Congregation website, which will gradually allow us to get used to these ways of communicating.

⁵ E.g. visits to the elderly, taking soup to prisoners, etc. etc.

⁶ E.g. ATD Fourth World; Caritas; Cafod; World Development Movement; migrants, the homeless, prisoners, refugees, etc. etc.

⁷ Direct or indirect participation; awareness raising in schools; listening; praying etc.

LAY-PEOPLE AND SISTERS: JOURNEYING TOGETHER IN OUR FOUNDERS' FOOTSTEPS

The two previous Chapters have already given a lead:

Berlaymont (2002): *'the charism derived from Alix Le Clerc and Peter Fourier belongs to both religious and lay life. If, for more than 400 years, it has taken flesh in religious life (the Congregation of Our Lady and other Congregations), our Congregation is not the only legatee. Today, our Associates are also the full and legitimate heirs.'*

Szombathely (2008): *'Today the Congregation is opening out to become one big Family in which sisters, Associates and friends seek to actualise, according to their state in life and their specific vocation, the intuition of the founders, taking account of their geographical, cultural and personal context.'*

TOGETHER: today that means Sisters, Associates, and all those who share with us the mission of the Congregation (schools, parishes, families and friends).

Our Convictions

- *They, like us:*

We long to quench our thirst together at the same well-springs (spirituality and charism) which give us all new life and energy.

- *What puts a spring in our steps:*

- the translation of Alix's relics: we gave her to everyone and now, together, we go on making her come alive as a presence in our midst.

- sharing the events of our lives; intercultural and international meetings.

- through extending a welcome to some of our non-practising lay co-workers or to some who feel excluded by the Church, and to Associates belonging to other denominations, we broaden our own life as 'Church'

Our Desires:

1. For the Extended Family of the Congregation to become active and effective, embarked on a shared mission: 'For a world renewed, go, make Him grow!'

2. For it to become a place of welcome, a means of entry where young people and adults can find meaning in life and realise their dreams to the full.

3. For Alix and Peter Fourier to become better known. For Alix to become, for young people today, a role model they can make their own.

Our Proposals

1. *To get moving*

- Lay-people and sisters together take time to share their way of living the common vision: 'for a world renewed, go, make Him grow!'
- This sharing will permit us to take on board different points of view and different ideas for action so that together we become active and effective.
- After this, it will be good to find ways of circulating the ideas throughout the whole family of the Congregation.

2. *Some practical suggestions*

Circulate and make better use of materials already available, in our schools and throughout the extended family of the Congregation.⁸

- in 2015/2016: organise events round Peter Fourier (b. 6 November 1565) and to celebrate the 80 years of the Congregation's presence in Vietnam, its 75 years in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and its 50 years in Hong Kong.
- make 9 December or 9 January a feast day for the whole Family.
- give the Extended Family its place in the Supplementary Articles to our Constitutions.⁹
- form mentors to help young people and adults find meaning in their life.
- boost the content of the Congregation website concerning our founders, our spirituality and charism, and suggest some resources for accompanying young people.
- invite lay-people and sisters to visit and share in each others' websites.

Steps to be taken

The implementation of this programme of action could be carried out by an international **pilot group** including both sisters and lay-people, with the purpose of organising how to get it going and how to follow it up.

During the next six years an **international meeting** is to be organised bringing together representatives from sisters and lay-people to provide an update on our common mission and to produce some new orientations.

⁸ The 'comic' book on Alix; the DVDs of Alix and Peter Fourier; the 10 pictures from the exhibition at Nancy, 'Alix Le Clerc and the Revolution in Education' etc.

⁹ This has been done; see new Supplementary Articles 8.8.1 & 8.8.2..

FORMATION FOR ALL, FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY

Formation does not mean only First Formation. We are all called, in the footsteps of Christ, to let ourselves be formed.

1. Formation in Spirituality

Our Convictions

Spiritual formation is directed to:

- a close relationship with God, grounded in the Word of God and in prayer
- following Jesus of Nazareth in our own situations attentive to the world
- formation in freedom in the Augustinian spirit: bringing our gifts to fruition in sisterly communion and in our apostolate
- formation in the three vows as motivating forces at the service of mission (cf. Const. 26ff)
- giving and nurturing a family spirit

Our Desires and Proposals

Formation in discernment so as to put our 'talents' at the service of our mission (cf. Matt. 25, 14-30):

- re-read our Constitutions and foundation texts (Peter Fourier, Alix Le Clerc, St Augustine)
- practise methods of discernment: e.g. Catholic Action ('see, judge, act'); the Ignatian Exercises (cf. Guidelines for First Formation, July 2009, p.4); the Rule of St Augustine
- help the sisters understand the meaning of poverty in the use of goods held in common, the importance of balance in personal relationships and how to be ready to undertake everyday tasks or designated assignments
- take into consideration each one's personal and professional skills
- learn how to dialogue (cf. 'Constructive Communication')

Steps to be Taken

It will be necessary to set in place:

- a blueprint for formation throughout the Congregation between this Chapter and the next including for example: a session for temporary professed sisters before their final vows; intergenerational sessions, or

by age group or by type of apostolic work; inter-congregational meetings.

- times of silence and retreat
- all sessions to be organised at the most appropriate level (local or international)
- the learning of French and English (cf. Supplementary Articles, 7.4.4)

2. Formation for taking Responsibility

Our Convictions

Formation for responsibility is directed to:

- discerning the talents and skills of each sister; calling her and trusting her
- promoting a sense of responsibility within a network of people charged with carrying out the Congregation's mission
- combining training in particular skills with spiritual formation.

Our Desires and Proposals

We propose to develop different types of training geared to:

- Those in charge of formation (international training sessions)
- Vicariate Councils (meetings between Vicariate Council and General Council)
- Vicariate Finance Teams (local and personalised)
- Sisters in Charge of Communities (local and personalised)
- Those in charge of institutions (i.e. schools, hospitals etc.; at local level)

Steps to be Taken

- by those in charge of formation: absorb the Guidelines for Formation and the evaluation document
- by Vicariate Councils: work has already begun between the General Council and the various Vicariate Councils based on the document by Micheline Tremblay; this, however, needs to be taken further.
- Minutes of Vicariate Council meetings should be sent to the General Council and processes of discernment shared.
- Training in how to prepare for elections; the General Council and the Extended General Council will make some suggestions.
- Vicariate Finance Teams are given the task of accompanying local bursars and those in charge of institutions

- There should be recourse to experts for the needs of formation and accompaniment at every level
- Training for sisters in charge of communities and institutions will take place at local level. Evaluating this training will allow the process to be continually improved.

3. Formation Communities

All our communities, whether for First Formation or not, are called to be formative.

Our Convictions

The formation of formative communities aims to take into consideration that:

- we are engaged in a common search; we need each other; each one is, for the other, both a support and a challenge.
- we want communities centred on God, and open, making room for each individual; communities geared to our mission of education (cf. Introduction to the Constitutions, pp. 1-5).
- we must have a particular concern for First Formation communities.

Our Proposals

We propose: working out an agreed programme / plan of action in every community or group (covering prayer, community life, apostolic life, co-responsibility, etc.).

Steps to be Taken

- Share the agreed programme with the Vicariate with a view to evaluation
- Compile a short guide for the community to review its agreed programme (cf. the Chapter document 'The Vocation of Each', below, p. 14)

- Evaluate the agreed programme annually, and whenever a new sister joins the community
- Depending on needs, the community might look for one or two people to help it; it is sometimes good to have recourse to experts in one's own country – if need be from outside the Congregation – capable of facilitating dialogue
- Learn French and English (cf. Supplementary Articles, 7.4.4)

4. First Formation Communities

Our Proposals

We propose: working out a clear plan for every stage of First Formation, adapted to the local context, and ensuring continuity between the stages, with the help of the formation guidelines and evaluation document (which need further work).

Each person contains a treasure: the mystery of God in her. Religious life is one of the fortunate ways of making this treasure visible.

Each sister is called to be a witness to God's love, joy and peace.

We make an appeal to all finally professed sisters: may their life bear witness to God's love, and to their membership of the Congregation of Our Lady.

THE VOCATION OF EACH, A TREASURE TO UNCOVER TOGETHER

We want first to affirm our identity as Sisters of Our Lady and then to suggest some steps for working pastorally with young people and for vocations.

1. The Identity of the Congregation of Our Lady, CSA.

Our Convictions

What gives us our impetus as Sisters of Our Lady is:

- the spirituality of the Incarnation as we follow Christ
- Mary's role as Mother; she commits us experience in a single movement both hearing and proclaiming the Word as 'women apostles' ('apôtresses').
- the inspiration of St Augustine: fraternal love; responsible freedom; sharing; seeking God together.
- the joy of being 'women apostles' in a dynamic international setting: educational and creative in response to the needs of the world, with a preferential option for the poor.

Our Proposals

- Study at Vicariate, Delegation and Group level in order to identify what needs to be discontinued (e.g. works which have lost their relevance in today's context) and to release energy to respond to the needs that are being expressed today.
- Reflection on collaboration between Vicariates, Delegations and Groups with the purpose of planning new implantations
- Sharing our experiences: making our prayer times available to all (Morning and Evening Prayer; reflecting on the Word of God; moments of spiritual renewal), as well as our apostolic experiences (places for apostolic projects)
- Production of a short handbook to help us review our personal life in the light of key elements of our identity: a simple lifestyle; fraternal life and reconciliation, etc. (e.g. as a supplement to the guidelines suggested in the Chapter document 'Formation for all', see above, p. 12).

2. Pastoral Work with Young People and for Vocations

Our mission is first and foremost to take care of young people: this is a responsibility for the whole Congregation.

Our Convictions

What gives us an impetus in our work for vocations is

- The conviction that each person carries a treasure: the mystery of God in her. Religious life is one of the fortunate ways of making this treasure visible; the way we live this life in the Congregation of Our Lady, with joy and peace, as we walk together with the poor, has its contribution to make (cf. '*spiritualité de la route*' in the document '*Spiritualité de Paule Sagot*', 1998)
- Appeals from others, from young people who are looking for meaning in their life
- Trust in God who continues to call: '*The harvest is great but the labourers are few*' (Luke 10, 12)

Our Desires and Proposals

We want to have the audacity to challenge young people by offering

- To organise activities with them (picnics; meetings; going camping; pilgrimages [Mattaincourt, Nancy etc.]; discussion groups; inviting sisters to share their vocation experiences)
- Participation in locally organised pastoral activities for young people (e.g. for the Year of Consecrated Life in 2015)
- Short-term experiences in different continents, including taking part in community life and the activities of the sisters and those they work with
- Each Vicariate, Delegation or Group should see whether they could offer something for young people and inform the Generalate so that information can be circulated
- With other Congregations, study new forms of religious life that could be adapted for young people today
- New ways of communicating: GO OUT TO young people where they are and ADAPT our language and our methods (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc.; a new flier)
- Education in discernment by sisters trained in spiritual direction and a handbook for accompanying young people

Steps to be Taken

- In each Vicariate, Delegation or Group (wherever possible) name someone to develop this pastoral work in liaison with other Vicariates etc. and with other Church organisations. The people named will find ways of operating as a network (at least by continent)
- Each Vicariate, Delegation or Group is invited to initiate whatever activities are possible for them
- In any activity, call as far as possible on friends, Associates, inter-congregational groups, and vocation work at every level
- For communication, it would be good to make one or two specific proposals geared to younger people on the Congregation's website. Teams by country could be envisaged. Set up networks to help each Vicariate.

SOLIDARITY WITHIN AND BEYOND THE CONGREGATION

'He calls us to follow him by living lives of poverty through giving up our personal goods and sharing all we have' (Const. 34)

'... we try, within our limitations and with respect for our different cultures, to help our societies to grow towards greater justice, truth, fellowship and peace, in accordance with God's plan for the world.' (Const. 5)

Our Convictions. What gives us life

1. Common ownership and sharing
2. Sound management of our assets
3. Committing ourselves to projects together

Our Desires

1. *A renewed commitment to sharing our goods* (Const. 35; 169) for greater fraternity
2. *A sound use of assets* in a clear sighted and responsible way
3. *Effective sharing* for more justice

Our Proposals

1. *for a renewed commitment to sharing our goods:*
 - help all the sisters to understand the importance of contributing to the common funds in a spirit of collaboration and trust
 - maintain a simple life style, in order to free ourselves 'from the temptation of the false values' of our consumer societies (cf. Const. 36)
 - put into practice among ourselves the sharing of our time, our abilities and our energies
2. *for a sound use of our assets:*
 - within the context of each country organise meetings for bursars, those in charge of institutions, those who will be in charge in the future, sisters in formation etc.
 - draw up financial budgets at all levels
 - have 2 (or even 3) signatures on all bank accounts. In each country, make sure that the sisters' wills all conform to the laws of the land, and that the originals are kept in the Vicariate Office
 - at every level, (in)form the sisters about the state of the finances

- achieve the aim of getting the sisters to present their accounts – on time – to the bursar, so that the balance sheet of the Vicariates etc. and of the Generalate can be more accurate; this is to be done in dialogue with the appropriate sister

3. *for working towards a more just world:*

- support projects both within the Congregation (cf. 'Steps', 3 below) and outside the Congregation (either locally or in a different country)
- develop the practice of making financial investments that support projects favouring those in need, and make investments as ethical as possible, at local, Vicariate and general levels
- keep in touch with economic and educative initiatives which help people to promote their own development
- support long term human development
- encourage and use Fair Trade
- encourage unemployed young people, e.g. to find work experiences

Steps to be Taken

1. *for a renewed commitment to sharing our goods*

- return to the spirit of the Constitutions (34-35): *'We put into the common purse all that we acquire and receive in the way of salary, pension, insurance, grants and such gifts as may come our way'*
- discuss in the Extended General Council (EGC) the amount of the annual contribution to be paid to the Generalate, in the light of information about the circumstances in the various Vicariates, Delegations and Groups, and then agree together on criteria for this type of sharing
- at meetings of the EGC, continue reflecting on the 'common fund of the Congregation', i.e. the common reserves held in different places ('multi pôles'), while taking into account the laws governing the Congregation in each country
- carry on the work of the Finance Coordination Team ('Conseil pour les Affaires Economiques' or CAE)
- reinforce the administration committees of our various juridical entities through the participation in them of someone in leadership in the Congregation

2. *for a sound use of our assets*

- continue reflecting on the future of Fontenay
- get a formation programme going for / in the 'AAA' countries (Africa, America, Asia): sharing experiences; defining good practices; mentoring at local level etc.

- work out a programme for setting up, managing and following up projects

3. for *working towards a more just world*

- make Vicariates etc. aware of the possibility of putting forward proposals for projects and submitting them to the Projects Office. Explain how this works and remind people about the Project Bulletin
- rally the sisters so as to make them aware of the financial appeals of the Projects Office, and so enable it to support even more of the Congregation's apostolic projects.

ORGANISATION OF THE CONGREGATION TO SERVE LIFE

'We are all responsible for the unity of the Congregation and for the direction we take' (Const. 84)

Our Convictions

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ calls us to situate ourselves within the **circumstances and events of the world** today. We seek to answer this call by means of the **common treasure** which gives us our existence as a Congregation:

The Word of God; our Constitutions; the Rule of St Augustine; the writings of our founders and the history of our Congregation; the Acts of our Chapters; the guidelines given by the General Council and the Extended General Council.

Our Congregation is made up of Vicariates, Delegations and Groups which are not independent but **in relationship** among themselves and with the General Council.

Endowed with the riches of this unity in diversity, we have already expressed, in the Chapter of 2008, our desire to **make life flow** more freely throughout the whole Congregation. To **become one body** is for us a life giving process. It implies that *belonging* to the Congregation must become more effective for each one of us and for each of our Vicariates, Delegations or Groups.

Our Desires

That is why, at every level, we wish to have a form of organisation which is not weighty or set in stone, an adaptable organisation which furthers

- Responsibility and participation on the part of each one
- Co-responsibility
- Subsidiarity at all the levels of government¹⁰

¹⁰ Subsidiarity means taking care not to do at a higher level what can be done more effectively at a level closer to the base. A search for the appropriate level of action invites us to take on responsibilities at local level, but also to refer to a higher level if the problem to be resolved is complex and goes beyond the legal, financial or technical capacity of the first level (cf. Const. 98; 104).

Our Proposals, with the Steps to be Taken

For this to take place more effectively

- We will take seriously meditating on our Constitutions (especially 83-87), making them the starting point for evaluating the way we live, and letting them inspire us to go forward
- Each Vicariate, Delegation and Group will study its organisation and its links with the whole body
- The Extended General Council will set up a team to provide technical help for each entity, by suggesting a methodology and some common criteria
- The General Council, too, will study its organisation, including where it lives
- The Vicariates, Delegations and Groups will join the General Council in seeing to the training of those with responsibilities or capable of taking them on. To this end it would be helpful to think of producing handbooks, guides, etc.
- The General Council and the Extended General Council will make some suggestions for training in the election process.

To help us become more and more a living international body, the Vicariates, Delegations and Groups, together with the General Council, **will arrange for**

- Exchanges and visits of sisters from different countries for both first and ongoing formation
- A period of international juniorate together - not necessarily in Europe – for those who are temporarily professed
- International workshops and other meetings

To further the flow of life, we will aim to improve communication between us all: communities and sisters 'on their own', Generalate, Groups, Delegations and Vicariates by

- continuing the work on 'Constructive Communication'
- using up to date methods for circulating information quickly
- working out between the General Council and the Vicariates, Delegations and Groups a way of ensuring that documentation is received simultaneously in each country in its own language

To make sure that all this fits effectively into the constantly evolving nature of our society both at local and at worldwide level, **we will ensure that**

- We listen to the needs of the times
- We regularly evaluate the life of the Congregation and of society
- The Extended General Council keeps a grip on all this work so as to give the necessary forward thrusts

With the **expansion of the Congregation into an Extended Family** open to lay-people, our organisation is already being transformed.

Lay-people are present with us in many different ways: as co-workers in the educative mission of the Congregation; as Associates, bursars, administrators, staff in our houses; in group meetings; as experts, friends, family, neighbours ...

Our ways of relating to them are many and various:

Simple daily proximity; inviting them into the places where we live; sharing the Word of God and current problems in our society; sharing responsibilities; meetings at national and at international level ...

The sharing of our charism and our values is at the heart of these relationships, in mutual exchanges, in collaboration, in support and challenge, and in friendship.

We will try, with them, to be creative, in order to **grow as Church** and so that, in our world as it is, a real **human community** may develop.

Our desire is to follow this path and adjust our organisation to enter into this evolution (cf. the Chapter document 'Travelling Together ..'; see above, pp. *).