



General chapter 2023
Preparatory commission

***"The Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk 1:15).
Living and proclaiming the hope of the Gospel***

Letter (to religious and laity)

To Assumptionist religious, to the laity of the Alliance, to the laity associated with the mission of the Assumption, to all the friends of our religious family, to all people of good will interested in the Kingdom of God,

Dear Brothers and sisters;

We are entering a phase of preparation for our General Chapter on the theme: "**The Kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1:15). Living and proclaiming the hope of the Gospel**". This important moment comes at a time when the universal Church is engaged in a synodal process. How can we not see in the concomitance of these two events a call for the Assumption? The synod on synodality is indeed an invitation for each baptized person to feel part of the people of God, to participate in the mission of the Church by becoming a missionary disciple. It is also a moment of spiritual discernment that involves listening to each other and to all the components of the People of God, through prayer and listening to the word of God in order to *"make dreams germinate, to arouse prophecies and visions, to make hopes blossom, to stimulate confidence, to heal wounds, to weave relationships, and to resurrect a dawn of hope"*, to use the words of Pope Francis at the time of the convocation of the synod.

For the Assumption, which is entering a state of Chapter, this is an invitation to become more synodal, to grow in the awareness of belonging to a religious family, of solidarity in the mission to respond to the calls of the Spirit, whether we are religious or lay, whatever our Province of origin, whatever our mission or our present level of responsibility. An Assumption that is more synodal is an Assumption that wants to grow in its capacity to discern what the Lord is doing for it, and what he expects of it in the years to come.

For this, the Assumption needs the contribution of all. It needs to gather the convictions, the intuitions, the dreams, the hopes of each person, lay or religious, of each community, of each commission, of each council, of each group of the Alliance... That is why the commission preparing for the General Chapter has come to solicit you by proposing, not to reflect on predefined themes, but to enter into a process of discernment and appropriation of the theme of the General Chapter. It is a question of asking ourselves how our charism orients

our view of the world and of the Church. In what way is the theme of the Reign of God a resource for identifying and meeting the challenges of our time? What dream does our motto "Thy Kingdom Come" inspire? How does it broaden our horizons and our imaginations?

To initiate this work of discernment, the Preparatory Commission proposes an approach inspired by the examination for the Kingdom. Other paths are of course possible (Gospel sharing, lectio divina, life review...), the important thing being to remain in a spiritual process.

We expect that each community or group, at the end of this sharing anchored in prayer, will be able to answer the following questions:

- To what signs of the coming Kingdom are we attentive? How does the Assumption contribute to this? What gifts has God given to the Assumption to enable it to respond to them?

- To what signs, to what calls, should the Assumption be more attentive in order to live and announce the Gospel today? How can the Assumption become more synodal? Are these calls likely to modify our apostolic priorities, to transform our lifestyle? What resources could we mobilize to respond to them while remaining faithful to our charism?

- Pope Francis invites us to "germinate dreams, awaken prophecies and visions, make hopes blossom, stimulate trust, heal wounds, weave relationships, and resurrect a dawn of hope." What does this mean for the Assumption? How can the passion for the Kingdom stimulate our imagination? What are the obstacles we must overcome?

Once the answers to these questions have been collected, the preparatory commission will make a first synthesis that will be sent to you before initiating a second phase of discernment at the level of the body that we form.

Your answers should be sent to cpcaa2023@gmail.com, before March 31, 2022.

Rome, January 18, 2023

Fraternally,

The preparatory team:

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Proposal for a spiritual exercise

I. Confession and praise

Begin by imploring God's mercy and forgiveness on each of us, for all our insensitivities to **the flame of the Kingdom of God** in our personal lives, in our communities and in the surrounding world.

"I want to sing to the Lord while I live, I want to play for my God while I last" (Ps 103:33).

Our life, our existence is called to be a permanent praise to God. We have many reasons to praise and thank the Lord in our lives as sons and daughters of the Assumption. In this Chapter period, let us give thanks to the Lord for our community and our religious family. Let us laud him for this world, which is ours. He loves it and gives it to us for love. *"Lord, you have loved this earth... Show us your love, Lord, and give us your salvation" (Ps 84, 2.8).*

It is in this world that the Gospel and the Church, our mother, unfold. It is also in this world that the Kingdom of God is manifested, through our personal lives and in our communities. Let us thank the Lord for the diversity of vocations within his Church. Let us praise him in particular for the merciful welcome he reserves for each one of us, despite our errors.

I. Let us be enlightened by the Word of God

- *"Jesus then said: What is the kingdom of God like? What can I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden; the seed grows into a shrub, and the birds of the air nest in its branches. Then he added: To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven that a woman took and mixed with twenty kilograms of flour. And in the end, the whole dough rose" (Lk 13:18-21).*

- *"It is the smallest of all the seeds: but when it has grown, it overtakes the other plants in the garden and becomes a shrub, so that the birds of the air come and nestle in its branches" (Mt 13:32).*

- Mark 1

NB: Other references are of course possible to nourish the sharing. It is possible to choose a text by Father d'Alzon or a text by Pope Francis from The Joy of the Gospel, Laudato si', Fratelli tutti or an excerpt from the letter of the Superior General on the Kingdom...

III. **The Kingdom in us, among us and around us**

To identify in my personal life, in that of my community/congregation and of the Church as well as in the world (my social environment) loved by God:

- To what signs of the coming Kingdom are we attentive? How does the Assumption contribute to this? What gifts has God given to the Assumption to enable it to respond to them?
- To what signs, to what calls, should the Assumption be more attentive in order to live and announce the Gospel today? How can the Assumption become more synodal? Are these calls likely to modify our apostolic priorities, to transform our lifestyle? What resources could we mobilize to respond to them while remaining faithful to our charism?
- Pope Francis invites us to "sprout dreams, awaken prophecies and visions, make hopes blossom, stimulate trust, heal wounds, weave relationships, and resurrect a dawn of hope." What does this mean for the Assumption? How can the passion for the Kingdom stimulate our imagination? What are the obstacles we must overcome?

IV. **Address an explicit prayer to the Lord** for myself, my community (and its mission), my church and my society. (This prayer can be a request or a thanksgiving).