



Dear Brothers,

Greetings to you all once again.

Here in Rome late summer has given way to autumn with cooler but endlessly sunny days. The house shutters are open as we welcome the sun into the house once again.

Perhaps this is a metaphor for welcoming into our Congregational ‘house’ the scenarios that describe what our future *could* look like.

Scenario Building

We were delighted with the increased participation in the Scenario Building Zoom meetings last Saturday. In the first session there were 145 cameras in operation, some of them with two or more Brothers, so there were over 150 Brothers involved. More than 90 were involved in the second session.

It seems to us from our own participation and from feedback since, that there is palpable excitement around the process, as Brothers recognise that all contributions are welcome as we seek to co-create our future.

In one group, a **younger Brother** from the Africa Province shared how proud he is to belong to a Congregation that invites all of us to look together at the dark side of our lives and to contribute to working together for a better future.

Congregation Chapter



Emmaus Centre, Dublin. Are the arrows significant?

We are also delighted that the easing of regulations regarding travel are helping those who will be attending the Chapter when it resumes at the Emmaus Centre, Dublin in January.

Because our inclusive, participatory process has so many similarities with the principles of synodality promoted by **Pope Francis**, we recommend two addresses given by the Pope recently.

1. The Pope's remarks at the opening of the Synodal path, October 9th

[CLICK HERE](#)

2. The Pope’s homily at the Opening Mass of the Synodal path, October 10

[CLICK HERE](#)

We also recommend that you read an address given in June by **Vincent Long OFM Conv, the Bishop of Parramatta**, Australia, prior to the Plenary Council of the Australian Church. Bishop Long fled Vietnam in 1979 on a refugee boat.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Both Pope Francis and Bishop Vincent have the courage to name elements of our Church, as institution, that are in need of reform. We know that many Brothers are acutely aware that the Church is *semper reformanda*. (Always to be reformed). So too our Congregation.

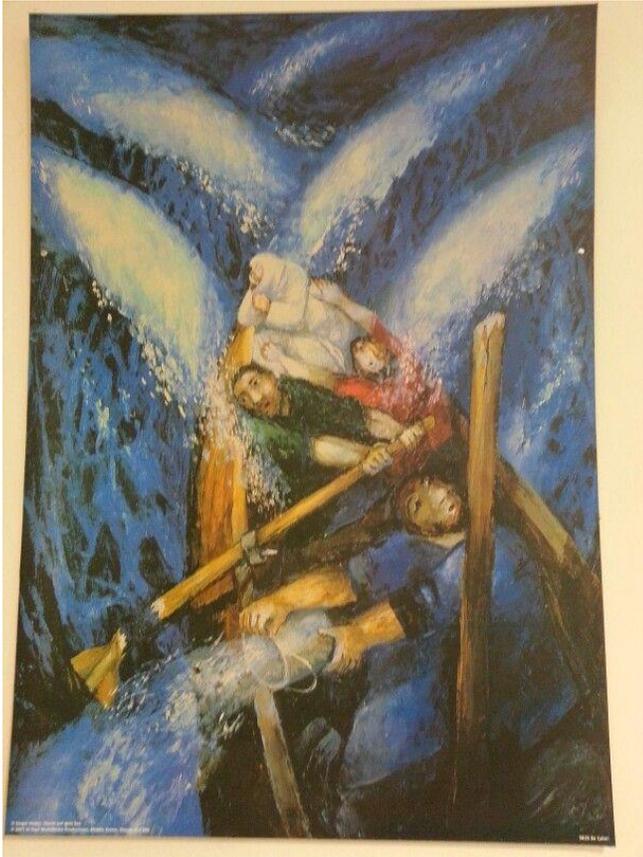
“We have always done it that way’ is poison for the life of the Church.”
Pope Francis

Isn’t it remarkable that just when we needed it, Zoom technology appeared in our lives, and just as we are moving toward co-creative participatory imagining of our future, the Pope is promoting a similar thing for the whole Church? Providence is indeed our inheritance.

Chapter motif and prayer

The Chapter Planning Committee has decided to keep the prayer and the *boat in the storm* motif as we prepare for the resumption of the Congregation

Chapter. The prayer and image can be regarded as both a link between the two sessions of Chapter, as well as a rich source for reflection on our current experience.



Chapter Prayer 2022.

Loving God

As we continue to discern your will
and to co-create our future as Religious Brothers,
we pray that we be free from all self-interest and
fear.

Open us to your ever-present creative Spirit
which leads us to see your love
in all things and all people.

Renew in us the charisma of our Founder,
Blessed Edmund Rice
who saw Christ present
and appealing to him in the poor.

Help us to engage in enriching conversation
with our Brothers and all people
as we seek to deepen our response
to the invitation of Jesus
to see everything with the eyes of faith,
to do nothing but with a view to You
and to ascribe all to You.

May the Brothers who gather in Chapter

be faithful to our deepest aspirations
and at this time of change and challenge,
give us the courage to say
'The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away:
Blessed be the name of the Lord'.
Amen.

Future Chapters

CICLSAL¹ has advised Religious Congregations that following their General Chapters, which may have been postponed, new teams are elected/appointed for the full term as specified in the Constitutions and that the next General Chapter follows that full term. Thus for us, Congregation Chapters will be in 2022 and 2028.

¹ The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Laudato Si'

I ask you, in the name of God, to defend Mother Earth
Pope Francis

Many will be aware of a multi-year *laudato si'* roll-out plan, beginning in November 2021, to make communities around the world totally sustainable in the spirit of the integral ecology of *laudato si'*.



Religious Congregations have been invited to join this 7-year plan in a special way. We are in communication with PLTs to explore how, as a Congregation, we might respond to this urgent planetary need. It is one thing for us to sign up as a Congregation, but another thing altogether to honour the commitments involved. You might like to share your ideas with your PLT.

More information can be found in the excellent Laudato Si' website. [CLICK HERE](#)

We suggest that Brothers no longer in active ministry might find a wealth of opportunity amongst the 7 goals in the graphic above. Remember that what you do with your heart affects the whole universe.

Blessings to all

Hugh, John, Peter, Richard