

Report of St. Joseph MC, Holy Trinity, AL / Pre-chapter preparation meeting (7 November 2014)

Present: Frs. Thaddeus Searles, Gary Banks and Dennis Berry. Fr. Clif Marquis was on annual retreat.

The "Joy of the Gospel" and General Cenacle XV:

- Impossible to "legislate" basic message of *Joy of the Gospel*: it will only flow, as the Holy Father says, from someone "who has truly experienced God's saving love." This is the heart of it.
- The call to be and help others become "communities of missionary disciples" seems to be totally in agreement with the founding vision of Fr. Judge and the Cenacle: "every Catholic an apostle for the Preservation of the Faith"
- Pope Francis' references to the "poor" must be understood in a global context. Certainly the dramatic needs of the "poor" in Latin America and Africa are radically different from the "poor" of the US. The "poor" in the US might include the immense population of "undocumented" people with all the social, economic and cultural issues accompanying this situation.

Other experiences and sources regarding our charism and how we live it out:

- Relative to our work with the undocumented in almost all our missions in the US, a need for greater cooperation and coordination, a more carefully thought out plan and direction regarding where our pastoral/mission approach is leading these communities we serve.
- We support the idea of a specific Missionary Cenacle curriculum in our formation programs and would hope that the members of GCXV will have the opportunity to see, review and affirm this curriculum.
- Specifically, we are aware of a need to enter into an active dialogue with the MCA to help the STs to understand and develop concrete skills and methods for fulfilling Article 8 of the Constitution. If we are "to call forth apostolic men and women from everyday walks of life to become lay associates in the Missionary Cenacle Family," how do we do it most effectively?
- We affirm the work of the Mission Committee regarding the formation of communities of lay apostolic formation (CALF) with their four key dimensions: kerygma (conversion), koinonia (community), didache (catechesis/teaching), diakonia (commitment/service).
- We see the value of Center(s) of Lay Leadership Training but affirm the necessity of incorporating the best practices of the various formation programs now being used by the confreres in the planning and programming for these centers.
- An alternative proposal to having our own MC/ST centers was discussed. Could we use existing programs of lay apostolic/missionary formation (e.g. SEPI, CELAM) and allow our missionaries to be engaged in more "front-line" missionary work? The challenge of utilizing existing programs would be how to instill in them our charism and spirit. What means could be used to do this?
- A similar question arose regarding the formation of our seminarians, especially with the smaller numbers in the US. Would it be better to have these seminarians in a diocesan seminary where their seminary education could be supplemented with specific ST formation?
- Related to the above is how to best assure that the charism is clearly communicated where a multi-cultural matrix does exist. Much of our ST formation historically took place in the context of a single linguistic, cultural identity. Today we have STs from as many as 11 different countries with 5 or 6 distinct languages. This will be one of the challenges of the ST formation curriculum cited above.

For the prayerful consideration of the members of GCXV:

- There seems to be little agreement among the confreres regarding the best means to support and promote our spiritual life in a united way as a congregation. Our uneven practice regarding both style and frequency of annual retreats is one indication of this challenge. It is our belief this issue needs to be addressed by the members of GCXV as well as by the congregation at large.