

Junta Regional - Puerto Rico

This is my summary of the meeting celebrated in Puerto Rico. It is based, not only on the document sent to us, but also on my conversation with Marco Antonio Sánchez and on observations by Victor Santiago.

+ Where are the signs of unity and/or conflict in what you heard in the regional meeting?

Of unity:

- The document *Joy of the Gospel*
- The work done in Puerto Rico, the economy, life in the Cenacle

Of conflict:

- The human aspect has been neglected
- The General Council has been absent, lack of openness, dialogue, conversation
- Changes in personnel . Should changes come about because of personal desires or because of mission needs?
- The mission is stagnant. It seems that much of our effort goes to please the diocese, maintain things, personal status. The Trinitarian mission bogged down. Should the congregation remain in Puerto Rico? The MCA can keep the charisma on the island.
- There is no need for more documents
- The meeting of Custodians was short on productivity
- There is discomfort with the mentoring program. Victor: manuals, procedures, we have gone way beyond the needs of the candidates
- Pessimism and disappointment
- Crash of experiences

+ What needs are cropping up in the region? What ideas and hopes?

- According to our charisma, the formation of lay people is urgent, not just academically but to be missionaries.
- Not just parish ministry
- No more of the same

+ In what way did the regional conversation deal with the congregation? Where did they deal with the local portion of the vineyard?

- It is taken for granted that the questioning in Puerto Rico applies to the whole congregation
- The mission we have, is it just for maintenance sake?

- Why stay where we are?
 - What is the role of the General Council for a local mission? Are we only listeners without dialogue or follow up?
 - The parish is not the only way of transmitting the charisma of the congregation
 - Support of the MCA because they also partake of our charisma, especially where we are not present
 - Formation programs, are they adequate for the needs of our vocation candidates?
-

History of a Process

Marco Antonio Sánchez Mendoza
Víctor Santiago Mateo
Rosendo Herrera Rodríguez

1.0 On Friday the 17th of October 2014, we had a meeting of the Fajardo/Humacao presbytery in Puerto Rico. The following STs work in the diocese: Jesús Palomares Vega, Marco Antonio Sánchez Mendoza, Victor Santiago, Ramón Mateo and Rocendo Herrera Rodríguez. In the morning, we met with Bishop Eusebio and the presbytery. Right after this meeting we met as the region of Puerto Rico of the Missionary Servants. We mainly discussed the future of the Trinitarians in Puerto Rico.

1.1 I transcribed the proceedings of the regional meeting

The confreres of the Rafael Cordero Cenacle met for their regional meeting in the parish Dulce Nombre de Jesús on the 17th of October, 2014. The following were present: Victor Santiago, Rocendo Herrera y Marco Antonio Sánchez. Jesús Palomares was not present

1.2 We began by referring to the materials sent for discussion by the General Council for our consideration for the pre-chapter and the General Cenacle and to submit our contribution.

1.3 We are aware of Pope Francis' *Joy of the Gospel* and how the ideas therein are very similar to those of our founder, Father Judge, who has left them to us as an inheritance. Thereby we understand that the CHARISMA of the Missionary Cenacle Family is today more than ever, in tune with Church thinking today, and validates it.

1.4 What do you want the delegates to prayerfully consider in the pre-chapter and the General Cenacle?

1. We focused in taking into account the reality of S.T presence in Puerto Rico and the experience we have had, the changes in personnel, the absences of some confreres that participate in our mission and the processes that take place by the action of the General Council.
2. We think that we have put too much emphasis on important elements of our life and the functioning of the Missionary Servants: the missions, the economy, up-dating all departments.
3. We feel that the human aspect of each member has not been worked on sufficiently, once again, reflection is based on the place you are in with other STs.
4. We do not see an effective presence of the General Council. Some confreres have not even received a call from the Custodian General inquiring as to their wellbeing and that of their mission, for more than a year.
5. We believe that the changes in personnel respond more to personal desire than to mission needs
6. In general, when sharing our experiences, we ended up with the same conclusion: TO PAY ATTENTION TO AND WORK FROM EVERY ANGLE THE REALITY OF OUR HUMAN CONDITION IN COMMUNITY LIFE AND ITS PROCESSES.

2.0 Sharing dreams

2.1 After the meeting with the presbytery, Marco Antonio and I shared our impressions of the meeting. Suddenly we began talking about our dreams as members of the congregation. Marco told me that he meets Fridays with lay people of Santiago Apóstol parish, where he works. The meetings are informal. They discuss various issues such as family, the community, etc. I told him that that was a life sharing experience. I then asked him, his parish being so close, why we did not do anything in common. We could put human resources together to do collaborative work. He talked about a previous experience in which that took place and it became an example for other parishes.

2.2 On Tuesday October 28th, we met again. I told him I had been motivated by our previous conversation. I noticed that he also seemed motivated and open to the idea of going at it together. Here are the steps we thought of:

1. Marco Antonio will continue meeting with his community in Santiago Apóstol discussing whatever issues come up.
2. Rocendo will begin a *lectio divina* with faithful who can come together to pray.
3. We will take a first step towards the integration of both parishes by having a general assembly of both parishes in San Patricio Church.
4. December is full of holidays. Make use of this space to create an awareness of travelling together as Christians, of coexisting together as people and as parishes.

5. I remarked that Palomares' departure is another change in the reconfiguration of the Trinitarian mission on the island. However, it is a moment to take charge of the process. It would be interesting if some of the recently ordained like Enrique Arango was assigned to Jesús Palomares's parish. We thought that someone like Quique would give a new face to pastoral care of youth in the three parishes. We recognize that this young priest has the charisma and the presence to reformulate pastoral care of youth. In the three parishes there are young people close to the parishes. Marco Antonio and myself can be pastors in San Isidro because Enrique is too young for that ministry.

6. All this area has the same cultural identity which would make sense for a joint pastoral approach. It would be a great experience of integration

7. The initial work areas would be the following:

- human development, the starting point
- leadership training, a second step
- An institute for theological and biblical formation of lay people
- Have a mass at San Patricio for the three parishes on Saturday mornings
- These steps have been the fruit of our encounters. They are simply our reflections as Missionary Servants. However, we recognize that the people of God will be giving us other points for us to consider and follow up, which could change these steps.

2.3 I personally talked with Victor Santiago and told him about our conversations with Marco Antonio. He told me that Bishop Eusebio is opened to the idea of the three parishes working in unison. He thought it was a good idea.

Today, November 8th

3.0 We sat with Marco Antonio to speak openly about the Jesús Palomares situation. We acknowledge that he is our brother, but probably he won't return to the island in the future. We both think that it is time to redirect the three parishes. To that end we ask that another Trinitarian be sent to the island.

3.1 In San Patricio we will have an integration celebration of that parish and the parish of Santiago Apóstol on Three Kings Day. We have talked to Marco Antonio about this celebration. We will be looking for a way, in the coming days of accompanying San Isidro in this effort of a joint pastoral initiative of the three parishes.