

**FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE XV GENERAL CHAPTER
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARIES OF THE HOLY
FAMILY, Jubilee Year of Hope,
and 130th Anniversary of the Congregation,**

ROME 7-26 October 2025



CAMMINIAMO
insieme per portare
LA SPERANZA
ai lontani
XV Capitolo Generale dei Missionari della Sacra Famiglia
ROMA 2025

Walking together to bring hope to those who are distant.

XV General Chapter of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. Rome 2025

130th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Congregation of MSF

To all the Confreres of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family

Dear Confreres,

The thirty-seven members of the 15th General Chapter of 2025 gathered together in a climate of prayer, fraternity, and shared work. Two delegates from Madagascar were unable to attend due to visa restrictions and the socio-political situation.

We presented and listened to the reports from the Provinces and Delegations, from the General Government with its Commissions, from the General Secretary, and the General Treasurer. Based on the reports, evaluations, and discussions in the Working Groups (8), Language Groups (4), plenary sessions, and conferences, we were formulated further analyses, took decisions, and made recommendations for the good of our Congregation in its service to the Church. (Const. 165)

From outside the Congregation, we invited Sister Nicla Spezzati, ASC, former Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, who gave a conference on the witness of religious life in the world and in the Church today; Father Silvano Marisa, MS, former Superior General of the Missionaries of La Salette, who presented a talk on the vocational crisis in the world and the flourishing of vocations in Africa and Asia, including his experience leading the MS; and Cardinal Mario Grech, General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops, who gave a presentation on synodality. Their conferences and those of our confreres truly enriched our reflections.

Our theme, "Walking Together to Bring Hope to Those Who are Distant," commemorating the 130th anniversary of our Congregation, expressed the spirit of the Chapter. During the Chapter, each of us proposed the best approach from different perspectives. The discussions, sometimes more moderate, sometimes lively, unfolded as a dynamic shared journey, but in the end, the spirit of synodality prevailed.

Yes, the decisions and recommendations contained in the Final Document are important. But even more important is the process of mutual listening. However, the most important of all is their implementation in our witness in various missions and communities, in the community life of the religious, in the formation and pastoral care of vocations, families, and Friends of MSF, in governance and synodality as a common guide for the years 2025-2031. Our personal and communal dedication is certainly necessary.

Before, during, and after the General Chapter, many confreres and Friends of MSF, faithful, religious men and women, priests, and bishops prayed for us. We are very grateful. During the Chapter, we felt the blessing of the Holy Family of Nazareth, the protection of Our Lady of La Salette, and the heavenly guidance of Father Jean Baptiste Berthier. May Jesus, Mary, and Joseph guide us all.

On behalf of the Capitular Confreres and the new General Government,

P. Agustinus Purnama MSF
Superior General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. After 130 years since the foundation of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family by the Venerable Father Jean Baptiste Berthier, the 15th General Chapter of the Congregation, guided by the Holy Spirit, sought to address the challenges that the Missionaries of the Holy Family face at the present time. To live our identity and charism continuously and to promote synodality and congregationality, the Chapter was inspired by the motto: "Walking Together to Bring Hope to Those Who are Distant."
2. Walking signifies the missionary dynamism of the MSF community that always seeks the will of God. Together emphasizes the value of our mutual support in life and work, in the spirit of synodality. Bringing hope, as the Jubilee Year reminds us, expresses the desire to joyfully actualize the work of the Founder, who never lost his great hope despite the difficulties in founding our Congregation. Distant describes the people who find themselves in difficult situations, suffering from poverty and isolated materially, spiritually, socially, or geographically.
3. Recognizing the need to put into practice the various issues we examined during the General Chapter, we made the following decisions.

II. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

1. The world we inhabit
 - 1.1. Our time is described in various ways, e.g., post-modernity, globalization, an era of pluralism, of technicalization, of desacralization, and of anthropological, religious, and cultural shifts.
 - 1.2. All these definitions aim to express a process of rapid and continuous change that brings with it: relativism of values, individualism, loss of meaning, and a permanent uncertainty (wars, conflicts, and various persecutions); the clash between preserving old lifestyles and developing new ones. Consequently, our time is one of trial.
 - 1.3. On the other hand, we also discover signs of hope, especially among the youth who connect with the values of the Gospel with their search for social justice and peace, commitment to human rights, volunteering, and solidarity, greater ecological awareness, sincere seeking of a more vibrant and authentic faith, contact between cultures, and the desire to discover new ways of living spirituality.
 - 1.4. In this context, we must maintain the faith of our Founder that Christ gives meaning to the life of every person in every time.
2. The situation of MSF
 - 2.1. Conditions vary depending on the country in which we find ourselves.
 - 2.2. In the delegations of Europe and North America, there is the problem of aging membership due to a lack of vocations. In the latter, the majority of parishes managed by members of the delegation are now entrusted to members from other Provinces.
 - 2.3. There are vocations in the Provinces of Poland, Latin America (which includes Mozambique), Java, Kalimantan, and Madagascar. Despite new vocations, there are signs of aging in some Provinces, including Poland, Latin America, and Java. Overall, the number of members of the Congregation has decreased in the last 6 years, from 771 to 704.
 - 2.4. Throughout the Congregation, there is a diversity of languages, cultures, habits, living conditions, training, and ways of carrying out the mission. This diversity is a richness but at the same time represents a challenge for communication and collaboration.
 - 2.5. To facilitate collaboration, the 2019 General Chapter decided to make Italian the official language of the Congregation. Provinces are encouraged to include the teaching of Italian in initial formation.
 - 2.6. In general, there is a good community life. But since the confreres are primarily engaged in parish ministry, in some cases, there is little community life because some live alone in parishes. This leads to a lack of visibility of our MSF identity, and people mistake us for diocesan priests.
 - 2.7. We collaborate with laypeople, particularly with Friends of MSF (AMSF) who share our spirituality.

3. Our expectations - where are we going?
 - 3.1. The confreres have different expectations regarding the direction the Congregation should take.
 - 3.2. Firstly, there is always a constant search for the implementation of the charism and mission of the Congregation, expressed in the desire to understand better the writings of our Founder and to reprint his foundational books.
 - 3.3. Congregationality. There is a desire to overcome provincialism and to strengthen the role of the Superior General, who leads the Congregation, promotes collaboration between Provinces and delegations, and among the confreres.
 - 3.4. Vocations. Members are aware of the urgent need for a vocation pastoral in a context of increasing secularization and decline in religious practice. It is hoped that the Congregation will seize all possible opportunities, including in mission areas considered more fertile for vocations, such as Africa and Asia.
 - 3.5. Formation. There is a need for a more structured coordination at the congregational level for the ongoing preparation of formators.
 - 3.6. Family Pastoral. Family pastoral is a specific and fundamental element of our charism based on the life of the Holy Family. It is essential to undertake specialized studies in the field of family pastoral, promote meetings among the confreres in order to share best practices and materials, and to collaborate with laypeople, particularly with AMSF.
 - 3.7. Mission. There is an increasing desire for collaboration in missionary work among the different Provinces which can be fostered by establishing missionary priorities.

III. HORIZON

In celebrating the 130th anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation by the Venerable Father Jean Baptiste Berthier, guided by the Holy Spirit, as Missionaries of the Holy Family who are part of a missionary and synodal Church, we renew our missionary enthusiasm and commit to promoting synodality and congregationality, walking together to bring hope to those who are distant as a living witness of the Kingdom of God.

IV. INSPIRATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

1. MISSIONS

A. Inspirational guideline

Our Congregation is of a missionary nature like the Church, outgoing and synodal; we desire to be close to those who are distant and the poor (both spiritually and materially) who have concrete faces in local Churches and to share life with them, with renewed fervor and missionary enthusiasm.

(Footnote C 2; *Dilexit Te* 110)

B. Operational guidelines

2. Strengthen relationships with bishops in our Provinces, update and/or establish written contracts for our mission, and continue collaboration with other missionary congregations to promote openness.
3. Strengthen missionary fronts with a congregational perspective as a way to realize our mission and define criteria and congregational priorities when discerning our presence, including in the vocational field.
4. Review and evaluate the different missionary fronts, parishes, and pastoral activities to align better with our charism and to guide decision-making regarding future missions.
5. Carry out our missionary tasks communally, avoiding, as much as possible, that our confreres live or work alone.
6. Prioritize training in the field of missions, during both initial and permanent formation, as well as the training of laypeople, to create and strengthen a culture of commitment and willingness to engage in missionary initiatives.

2. FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF MSF

A. Inspirational guideline

As Missionaries of the Holy Family, we are motivated by our Founder, Venerable Father Jean Baptiste Berthier, to witness, through our community life, that we are a religious family and to highlight, in our pastoral work, care for families and AMSF. As he taught us, family pastoral is also a pastoral for vocations (Const. 4), and the Christian family is a small domestic church (LG 11) and a sign of the Kingdom of God.

B. Operational guidelines

3. Create or strengthen Provincial Commissions for family pastoral work, with coordination among those responsible in each Province and the General Government representative.
4. Enhance family pastoral in such a way as to welcome, listen to, accompany, and help families to discern and integrate into the community, becoming collaborators in pastoral work according to the guidelines of our Congregation for family pastoral, utilizing these spaces to spark families' interest in integrating with AMSF to attract new vocations.
5. Create concrete forms of cooperation and joint work as a Congregation through meetings providing specific training and sharing of experiences for families wishing to integrate or who are already AMSF.
6. Strengthen the organization of AMSF through group formation, communication, and dissemination of materials on our charism and spirituality, with actions that make them feel like active participants in the mission.
7. Encourage and identify MSF members who are interested and well-prepared to engage in family pastoral and more directly in the animation and organization of AMSF.
8. Promote the creation of centres to support and reanimate families in collaboration with laypeople, including AMSF, and cooperate with family movements in the diocese and others.
9. In each Province, update the AMSF Statutes according to the possibilities available in the country and the Province and make use of them in each Province. The update would need to be approved by the General Government.

3. FORMATION AND VOCATION

A. Inspirational guideline

For us, vocation is the beating heart of the current mission of MSF, as well as the fruit of a prophetic and concrete vision capable of building the future on solid foundations, as taught by the Founder. The decline in vocations shows us that today there is an urgent need to prioritize the apostolate of vocations. For this reason, we strive to ensure quality training, both in initial and in ongoing formation. With the goal of increasing the number of vocations, we approach young people and adults with respect and dedication, offering them spaces for participation and witnessing congruently our religious missionary life.

B. Operational guidelines

4. Promote vocational development by supporting existing works and training capable companions to guide candidates in their family environment.
5. Promote a vocational culture by coordinating the work in the different Provinces through a dedicated contact person, strengthening the vocational team by supporting strategic vocational centres and encouraging interprovincial collaboration and the accompaniment of vocations in all aspects.
6. Invest in the qualified training of competent formators and the preparation of candidates for mission, establishing common programs, implementing updated training guidelines, and to make the most of the theological and pedagogical skills present in the Congregation.
7. Invite senior confreres to support the vocational and formative mission, especially in the area of prayer, recognizing their spiritual and experiential value, promoting their role as witnesses of the charism of Venerable Father Jean Baptiste Berthier. Also invite economic collaboration from the delegations to support the Congregation.
8. Commit through the vocational commission and coordinator at the Provincial and General levels to promote the search for and accompaniment of young people and laypeople available for mission, offering training paths suited to the concrete possibilities of each Province.

9. Ensure that Provincial and General vocational commissions incorporate principles of synodality and congregationality into initial formation, fostering experiences of missionary immersion that consolidate the charismatic identity of the Missionaries of the Holy Family.

4. COMMUNITY LIFE

A. Inspirational guideline

Inspired by the model of life of the Holy Family, we walk together in the light of the Holy Spirit, making the life of our religious community a place of joy, where we reaffirm our identity as children of Venerable Father Jean Baptiste Berthier. To realize this, we cultivate the art of authentic listening, remembering that it is in the silence of the heart that God speaks to us, calls us, and prepares us to share the gift of faith, hope, and love, a sign of the real presence of the Kingdom of God in the local Church and a sign of contradiction for the world.

B. Operational guidelines

5. Not to forget that the foundation of our community life is fidelity to the religious vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. The vow of obedience greatly helps to safeguard the harmonious organization of common religious life. At the same time, we must remember and strengthen the position of the superior.
6. Strengthen the awareness of each individual member's responsibility for the development of community life.
7. Develop community and personal prayer that, rooted in the listening to the Word of God, the study of our Constitutions, conferences, fraternal correction, and conversion of the heart, guides community life and mission towards a deeper participation in the action of the Holy Spirit.
8. Encourage a religious life rooted in our vows, lived with authenticity and radicality, so that the presence of the Kingdom may be a concrete light for the future and not a mere facade.
9. The General Secretary shall ensure effective and continuous communication with Provincial Governments and the Delegate Superiors through frequent meetings, digital tools, and a team specifically formed to promote collaboration among secretaries and with others, especially the youth.
10. Invigorate community life and strengthen our MSF identity through concrete tools such as a booklet that collects MSF prayers.
11. Appoint an MSF member responsible for organizing professional communication at the Congregational level and connecting all means of communication (Provincial websites, the renewed MSF website "Misafa," YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, a video on MSF for vocational purposes).

5. GOVERNANCE AND SYNODALITY

A. Inspirational guideline

Synodality is a constitutive dimension of the Church that is exercised through discernment (that is, listening, dialogue, sharing) and the renewed exercise of authority at all levels of the Congregation, open to the Holy Spirit, involving every member of the community, in order to walk together and to actualize the legacy of the Founder so that our religious life may be a motor of hope and enrichment both in the universal Church and in the local Churches.

B. Operational guidelines

6. Promote a continuous change of mindset and governing style towards increasing evangelical fraternity and co-responsibility that in various forms help develop the communal missionary momentum.
7. Elect and/or appoint superiors capable of listening, discerning, and dialoguing before deciding in order to oversee what must be done in fidelity to the mission of MSF.
8. Be open to the Holy Spirit who has the ability to act not only through superiors but also through every community and every member in our Congregation, always according to our rules.
9. Strengthen the role of the General Secretary and Provincial secretaries in carrying out their duties in the field of communication (among other things, social media and websites).
10. The General Government should promote: exchanges and visits (as possible) between members of the different Provinces or Delegations; community celebrations of significant events of our Congregation under a common theme; ongoing training guidelines aimed at understanding our charism and identity.

11. Ensure the tools for planning, monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating the implementation of capitular decisions in the life and mission of the Congregation.
12. It is recommended that within six months, the new General Government establish a commission to analyse the current governance model. The results of the investigation and any proposals for changes may be presented to the Council of the Congregation in 2027 (and, if necessary, also in 2029).

V. DECISIONS

1. Election of the Superior General

Superior General - P. Agustinus Purnama MSF

2. Election of the General Assistants

I. General Assistant and Vicar General – P. Marian Ryszard Kołodziejczyk MSF

II. General Assistant – P. Pedro Alban Aguilar Cardenas MSF

III. General Assistant – P. Yohanes Aristanto Hari Setiawan MSF

IV. General Assistant – P. David Ravaoavy Samianagnandaza MSF

3. Maintain the main part of Father Berthier's birthplace, and destroy everything else, without building a chapel.
4. Updates and changes to the Constitutions and the General Directory.
5. The General Chapter approved the “Final Document of the 15th General Chapter of the MSF Congregation, Rome 2025.”



**We are Sons of the Venerable Fr. Jean Baptiste Berthier MS
We Walk Together in order to Bring Hope to Those who are Distant with
Creative Fidelity**

