

# Continuing A Vision of Hope

*Plan for the Future*



**XXXI<sup>st</sup> General Chapter**

**Congregation of the Resurrection**

**29 June 2005 – 17 July 2005**

***Rome, Italy***

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## Redefining Hope

Hope, the Christian virtue most associated with Christ's resurrection is at the very heart of Resurrectionist spirituality, life, and mission. In fact, the resurrection of Jesus does not pertain to him alone, but has profound impact for each person, for the whole of humanity, and, indeed, for all the cosmos, and as such gives meaning to all our hopes. For this reason the XXXI<sup>st</sup> General Chapter of the Congregation of the Resurrection joyfully and with gratitude recognizes as its own "A Vision of Hope," which was approved at the dawn of the third millennium of Christianity by the XXX<sup>th</sup> General Chapter. We also confirm its even greater meaning in the face of the tragedies and cataclysms which, from the beginning, seem to characterize the beginning of this millennium.

We are convinced that the hope of our personal resurrection and that of society, founded on the unconditional love of God, experienced in the international community, and proclaimed in collaboration with the laity, is the authentic expression of our charism, which Bogdan Jański and his followers received as a gift of the Holy Spirit for the good of the Church and, indeed, of the whole world.

Our Founders and our religious tradition celebrate God's love ultimately expressed in the Paschal Mystery of Christ as the defining sign and the source of hope:

*"The love of God and the God who is love is both the beginning and goal of the Congregation, as well as its source and power – equally in life and ministry. ... Our Congregation has chosen to stand under the name of the most sacred mystery of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ; because as he himself by dying has destroyed death and by rising has restored life, so also we struggling under his banner, take hope to arrive at this – that dying to ourselves by his power, we will become partakers of his new, real, and eternal life which comes from Christ through our resurrection with him."*

(Rules of the Congregation of the Resurrection 1882, 2 and 5) <sup>1</sup>

We are called, as Resurrectionists, to participate personally in the Paschal Mystery, to die to ourselves by Christ's power and to rise with Him, surrendering ourselves to God and living for God and for others. The transforming power of God's love manifest in this profound conversion is the source of our own life and hope, and through us, the source of life and hope in our communal and apostolic activities. It makes us men of hope and gives us hope amidst the trials, difficulties, and disappointments of life. This saving power of God's love fills us with gratitude, recognizing God's faithfulness in our own past, his personal presence now, and the promised glory that awaits us with him in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Et principium huius Congregationis, et finis, et vita, et demum ratio ac vis vivendi, agendique, erit semper et in omnibus Amor Dei, et Deus qui est Amor. ... Constituitur vero haec Congregatio sub invocatione sanctissimi mysterii Resurrectionis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi: quia sicut Ipse mortem moriendo destruxit et vitam resurgendo reparavit, ita et nos sub hoc vexillo militantes obtinere confidimus, et virtute Ipsius nobismetipsis mortui, novae illius, verae ac sempiternae vitae, qua ex Christo est, per Resurrectionem cum Ipso participes efficiamur (*Regula Congregationis A Resurrectione D.N. Jesu Christi*, 1882, 2 et 5).

The participation in the Paschal Mystery of Christ not only introduces us into a new life in the Father with the Son, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, but calls us to share that life through our efforts towards the resurrection of society. In the divided, overwhelmingly fragmented, hostile, and desperate world in which people long for brotherhood, peace, and for such a future in which *“there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain”* (Revelation 21:4). Our fidelity to the charism of hope is a condition for fruitfulness in our life and ministry.

*“The world belongs to those who offer it the greater hope”* (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin). Our Founder, Bogdan Jański, sought that “greater hope” first in economics, then among the Saint-Simonists, and finally in God. As Resurrectionists, we proclaim that God’s love revealed in the Paschal mystery of Jesus Christ is that “greater hope” God offers to the world. Through our own life and mission we help others — as did Jański with his followers — to recognize their own experience of God’s love, giving them courage in their own dying (conversion) and rising (new life in Christ), and animate them to be in solidarity with others who experience fear, doubt, despair and hopelessness.

With great joy, we recognize and affirm that hope, which the Spirit poured out anew in our hearts at the time of the previous General Chapter, has already become the leaven of our new life; and different changes which have occurred within the life of our community confirm us in the spirit of hope. The initiation of the canonization process for Bogdan Jański and an intensification of prayers through the intercession of the Founders are signs that our charism continues and renewal occurs among ourselves and among those whom we serve. Some positive changes have occurred in the area of communication and mutual sharing of our lives within local, provincial, and regional communities, as well as on the level of the entire Congregation. We have grown closer to one another and have better experienced the international character of our community. Sometimes we have not yet discovered a way to share a common life under one roof. However, we are glad that even in such situations we undertake efforts to preserve a spiritual unity. In some sectors of the Congregation, notwithstanding many difficulties, we have some candidates to live with us and to continue our mission, which is evidence that both the joy of life and hope are radiating out from our common life. Finally, the source of our enthusiasm is a growing number of lay communities which accept our spirituality and want to work together with us for the resurrection of society.

The above life-giving transformation within our community life and apostolates becomes itself a sign of hope and stimulus to continue our efforts which we began at the previous General Chapter. For this reason, it is our opinion that the thematic title of the current Chapter, “Continuing a Vision of Hope,” is most relevant. This is also the sense of all the resolutions which follow: they emanate from hope and lead to hope.

## **Growing in Hope**

The experience of God's love in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, which made us people of hope, and the paschal dynamic of dying to ourselves and rising with Christ are a life-long process. For this reason, we have to become people of hope throughout our lives. Growing in hope is primarily a responsibility of the individual religious. However, no one should be abandoned in his own spiritual growth and no one should judge himself to be self-reliant.

### **Ongoing Formation**

- Action Resolution 1.** The Chapter, with gratitude, accepts the Handbook on Ongoing Formation, prepared by the International Formation Commission. It recommends that it become the point of reference in our personal efforts to become ever more people of hope, as well as in planning on-going formation on the level of local Houses, Provinces/Region and the entire Congregation.
- Action Resolution 2.** Before the next General Chapter, the General Curia and/or someone appointed by them prepare and lead the various Provinces, Region and houses dependent upon the Superior General on a retreat concerning the Vision of Hope.

### **Center for Resurrection Spirituality**

- Action Resolution 3.** That the Center be retained and continue to have its locus in Rome both as a way of emphasizing its international character and because the sources are there.
- Action Resolution 4.** That the Center continue publication of materials from our Community patrimony that include contemporary themes in Resurrectionist Spirituality and the Paschal Mystery.
- Action Resolution 5.** That the Center use the international Community web page to publish information, articles, publications, etc, that pertain to Resurrectionist Spirituality. It is desirable that this information be placed on the web Page in the primary languages of the Community (i.e. Polish, English, Portuguese).
- Action Resolution 6.** That the Center continue to receive adequate financial support from the Curia for the general good of the Community.

- Action Resolution 7.** i) The operating budget of the Center will be an item in the annual General Curia budget.
- ii) There will be no independent budget for publications. When such expenditures are requested these need to be approved by the General Curia.
- iii) When the Director is invited to provide services outside of Rome, those inviting him will be responsible for his travel expenses and per diem.
- Action Resolution 8.** The Superior General and his Council will appoint a Director within six months from the start of their new term.
- Action Resolution 9.** In selecting the Director of the Center, the General Curia should consider the candidate according to the following qualifications:
- Be a Resurrectionist.
  - Be bilingual or have the ability and willingness to learn the necessary language.
  - Have a basic knowledge of Resurrectionist history, theology, and the principles of the spiritual life, with a desire and ability, if necessary, to pursue graduate studies in the field of spiritual theology.
  - Have sufficient life experience, pastoral practice, and a talent for communicating spiritual truths and values in a practical manner.
- Action Resolution 10.** The term for the Director will last until the next General Chapter, at which point he may be reappointed or a new Director named.
- Action Resolution 11.** That the Director of the Center also help coordinate the work of the International Resurrection Studies Commission.
- Action Resolution 12.** That the Director in collaboration with the Provincial and Regional superiors identify people who can assist with translations into the primary languages of the Community.
- Action Resolution 13a.** The job of Director of the Center is a position which requires residence at the Generalate in Rome. The position of Director could be a Councilor of the General Curia.
- Action Resolution 13b.** Below are listed responsibilities for the Director, this list is not exhaustive:
- Promoter of the Community Patrimony.

- Member of the International Resurrection Studies Commission.
- Archivist.
- Museum curator.
- To support the preparation of the Resurrectionist Renewal Program.
- Encourage and assist each Province\Region in organizing symposiums, workshops, and retreats on the theme of Resurrectionist Spirituality or the theology of the Paschal Mystery.
- Prepare materials for retreats, workshops, or conferences based on the Principles of Resurrectionist Spirituality contained in the handbooks on formation.
- To be available to direct retreats, workshops, or provide conferences, upon request of a Province/Region.

**Action Resolution 14.** The Director of the Center reports to the Superior General, supervises such support staff as is made available to him, and collaborates with members of the General Curia, Provincial\Regional Superiors, and other members of the Congregation, as appropriate.

**Action Resolution 15.** An evaluation of the operation of the Center and the job performance of the Director will be done yearly and presented to the General Superior.

### **Resurrectionist Renewal Program**

**Action Resolution 16.** To hold the program at least twice before the next General Chapter.

**Action Resolution 17.** To determine the location, the time, and other details of the program, as well as to designate the coordinator, at the meetings of the Extended General Council.

**Action Resolution 18.** It may include the use of specialists in Resurrectionist patrimony and spirituality, religious life in general, and contemporary theology.

## Living Hope Together

### Collaboration with Laity

A particular expression of our charism is collaboration with the laity as well as creating together with them communities of Christian life. Bogdan Jański already foresaw such a model of working with the laity. We read about this in our Constitutions (para. 190), in our Charism and our Mission Statements, as well as having this highlighted in the *Vision of Hope* document from the XXX<sup>th</sup> General Chapter (1999). However, in order to have these lay associations existing formally within the congregation (para. 84, Constitutions), we need to receive apostolic approbation from the Holy See as stated in the code of Canon Law # 312.1.

**Action Resolution 19.** Be it resolved that the General Curia request the Holy See for permission that the Superior General be able to legally erect associations of lay people related to our Religious Community.

**Action Resolution 20.** Be it resolved that the General Curia be responsible for the formulation of a directory on lay associations within the Congregation of the Resurrection.

### International Community

It is integral and vital to more effectively bring about a communion of mind and heart (Acts 4:32) – to give us a sense of our relatedness as a Community, to promote clear lines of communication, and to make available information and news on a current and continual basis, e.g., Provincial/Regional newsletters, news of infirmed members, prayer requests, death notifications.

**Action Resolution 21.** To expand the role of the Secretary General (Constitutions, 114) to include the responsibility of acting as an international Director of Communications. In addition to gathering and disseminating news and information about the Congregation to all the members through the official newsletter of the Generalate, the Secretary General is responsible for the coordination of the international website.

Each Province/Region will appoint a Director of Communications to assist the Secretary General in this role.

### **Recommendations:**

1. In order to assist the Superior General in his concern for the unity and development of the entire Congregation (cf. Constitutions, 90) we recommend that the Extended General Council meet twice a year (cf. Constitutions, 108).

2. That the practice of inviting the Regional Superior to attend the Extended General Council be continued.

## **Proclaiming Hope**

### **Missio ad Gentes**

Pope John Paul II asked Religious Communities to be concerned with the *missio ad gentes*. In 1999 the XXX General Chapter responded affirmatively to this request and in 2002 we began our mission in Tanzania. Today our brothers are fulfilling the apostolic charism of our Congregation in Tanzania. The Provinces and Region of the Congregation as elder brothers wish to whole-heartedly welcome and embrace our youngest brother, the Tanzanian Mission. We acknowledge his right to look to his elder brothers for example and various means of support.

- Action Resolution 22.** Maintain the fund for the support of our missions (VH #32).
- Action Resolution 23.** Recognize the authority of the Superior General to recruit and appoint members to serve in the missions of the Congregation after consultation with the Provincial or Regional Superior (VH #33).
- Action Resolution 24.** Members appointed to the missions will be appointed for a specific term and they will come under the jurisdiction of the Superior General as members of a House directly dependent upon the Superior General (VH #34).
- Action Resolution 25.** Education and formation regarding the missions should occur for religious from their earliest formation, as also for those who would agree to such appointments after formation (VH #35).
- Action Resolution 26.** That each Resurrectionist have special concern for his brothers in the missions and for the people they serve. We should regularly pray for them and speak about them and their work amongst ourselves and the people we serve.
- Action Resolution 27.** That we strongly endorse and commit ourselves to the mission in Tanzania.

## **Sharing A Vision of Hope**

Through the grace of the Holy Spirit at the XXX<sup>th</sup> General Chapter we identified “hope” as being the particular gift given to us by that same Holy Spirit. But to be Resurrectionists means to be men of hope, and thus men of the Paschal Mystery. Therefore, we must be committed to daily dying and rising with Christ, who is our source of hope. Without our personal commitment to living the Paschal Mystery we fail to be beacons of hope to our despairing world.

**Action Resolution 28.** That each Resurrectionist share elements from the Vision of Hope document pertinent to the communities to whom he ministers in our bulletins, preaching and by other means of communication, especially in our websites.

## **Pastoral Handbook**

We acknowledge the efforts of the Ontario-Kentucky and Polish Provinces for completing their Pastoral Handbooks. However, we also acknowledge that Action Resolution #25 from the Vision of Hope has not been fulfilled in its entirety. We reaffirm the importance of such a document for the pastoral life of our Congregation.

**Action Resolution 29.** Within the next two years all parts of the Congregation shall have completed their Pastoral Handbooks and submitted them to the General Curia.

## **Specialized Ministries**

We recognize that the apostolic mission of the Congregation, pastoring and educating, have been carried out in our traditional apostolates of parishes and schools. However, since the foundation of the Congregation the need for specialized ministries, to pastor and educate in different settings, have arisen in response to the signs of the times.

**Action Resolution 30.** The General Chapter acknowledges the necessity for specialized ministries. These ministries should be only undertaken with the approval of the competent major Superior who will regularly review these ministries with the religious who are involved with them. The review needs to be focused upon whether or not these specialized ministries are fulfilling the charism and mission of the Congregation.

## Celebrating Hope

### 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bogdan Jański's Birth

Our Founder lived during a time and amongst a people who were despairing. He did not let this despair triumph over him but he kept his eyes firmly fixed on the Risen Lord. Bogdan Jański needs to be promoted today as a man of profound hope, as a man whose hope was clearly founded on the Lord.

**Action Resolution 31.** That all levels of our Community, General, Provincial/Regional and local make plans to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jański's birth. Each celebration needs to be especially developed for and suited to the participants.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The South American Region in response to the widespread problem of unemployment has developed Bogdan Jański prayer cards with a specially composed prayer for the Founder's intercession. The other areas of the Congregation and those working in various apostolates could do the same responding to the particular despair encountered by those to whom they minister.
2. We recognize that it is not possible to mandate joy and enthusiasm but we want to strongly encourage each Resurrectionist to make great efforts to be joyful and enthusiastic about our Founder and this special anniversary.

### Canonization of Bogdan Jański

The process of canonization of Bogdan Jański has been formally opened. On May 19, 2005, at the Bishop's Palace in Plock, there took place the first solemn session of the process, which was at the same time the official beginning of the cause. The end of the diocesan investigation is planned for March 26, 2006, the 199<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jański's birth.

**Action Resolution 32.** In order to promote the "Fama Sanctitatis" of Bogdan Jański among our membership and beyond, the Major Superior or the Regional Superior will encourage the use of the Intercessory Prayer to Bogdan Jański in each parish/institution of each Province/Region.

**Action Resolution 33.** An annual report will be presented at each Extended General Council meeting detailing the status of the Canonization Process of Bogdan Jański by the Postulator and each Province/Region will present a report on what specific efforts have occurred in each respective Province/Region.

- Action Resolution 34.** The funds for the Canonization Process of Bogdan Jański will come first from donations made for this purpose and then \$5000 (US dollars) annually from each Province, \$1000 (US dollars) annually from the South American Region, and \$1000 (US dollars) annually from the Roman House.
- Action Resolution 35.** The General Curia will provide a CD edition of all Jański's writings (Diary, Letters and Varia).

## **Varia**

### **Finance Commission**

#### **Recommendations**

1. That an annual review (not audit) of the year end report be done, preferably by non Resurrectionist.
2. That the next Econom General receive, if necessary, financial training.
3. That a computer book keeping program be used as much as possible.

#### **Concerns**

1. Money received from Provinces\Region designated for the missions are recorded as "capital receipt". When the funds are sent to the missions the amount of capital receipts is decreased. There is no listing of these funds as "income received", then when forwarded listed as "expense". Our commission believes listing these funds as "capital receipt" rather than as "income" is incorrect book-keeping.
2. Our commission believes that decisions on investments should, at the very least, be approved by the General, ideally by the General Curia. The Econom General should not have sole decision making authority in this matter.

#### **Changes to General Directory on Temporal Goods**

1. At the end of section III-5 remove last sentence in the first paragraph and replace with:

Each year the Extended General Council will review the amounts set by the Holy See to ensure the General Directory on Temporal Goods is in keeping with those amounts.