



Dear Brothers,

CLT re-assembles in Rome

For the first time since March of last year, when we dispersed from Lima, we are together in one place. It has been wonderful to be together again and to share stories, as well as to have in-person meetings.

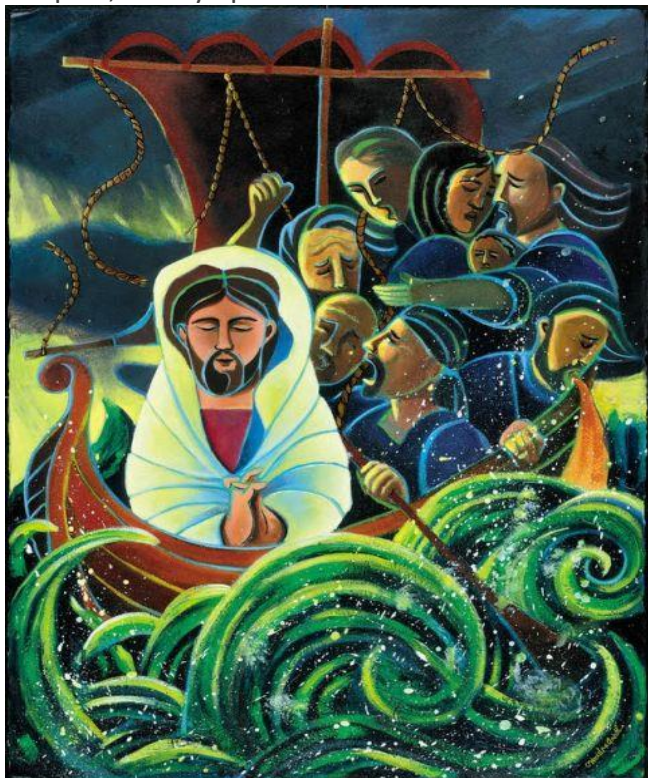
Congregation Chapter update

We have settled on the dates for the re-convened Chapter. These are January 23 to February 5, 2022, inclusive.

At this stage we are still collecting data to see which of the two sites we are considering (Nemi near Rome or the Emmaus Centre, Dublin) is better from the point of views of visas and Covid.

We have decided that, in the current circumstances, the four of us on the CLT will form the planning group for the Chapter, along with the facilitator **Matthieu Daum**, whom we met by zoom today.

In these days of Covid, political, social, climate and religious turmoil, the image below, on the same theme as the one used for our Congregation Chapter, is very apt.



No storm can shake my inmost calm. Icon by Salesian Brother Michael McGrath

Since the resumed Chapter will be for a period of just two weeks, careful consideration will need to be given to what it will be possible to achieve during that time. Capitulants will need to be well prepared including taking into account what emerges from the upcoming *Scenario Building*.

Scenario-Building Zoom Meetings

Four International Zoom gatherings are planned from September to December. The first will be on September 18th. The sign-up process and details will be available soon.

The main focus of the first Zoom gathering will be to explain a “scenario process” that we will be using to encourage all Brothers in each Province to look at their reality and explore how we move into the future as Provinces and as a Congregation.

You are encouraged to participate in these zoom gatherings so that you can help create our future.

Synod on Synodality and Congregation Chapters



On September 7, the Vatican issued a *Preparatory Document* for the Synod on Synodality. Note that the synod is listed as 2021/2023. The emphasis is on an ongoing process rather than a single one-off event. The following extract from that document resonates strongly with the purpose of Chapters in Religious Congregations and the participatory processes common in these times before, during and after the Chapters themselves:

'the purpose of the Synod, (and we might say 'Chapters' ed.), and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but 'to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands.'

In another place the phrase *journeying together* is used. This is the phrase we have used in our Congregation with regard to *Our Way into the Future*.

In addition to the **Preparatory Document** is another entitled: **Vademecum – Handbook for Listening and Discernment in Local Churches**.

Here are the links for these two documents.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1s1YrJ2qBzJTYi73sL4Wm7VdqRU1J5HuY/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Lfmjl1shL8TZon8DiMVAoPnm1vOR-hdo/view?usp=sharing>

Both are excellent representations of **Pope Francis'** vision for a renewed Church characterised by participation. He has said that *'listening is more than simply hearing'*.

In a letter from the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) to all Religious men and women (24 June 2021), **the Cardinal Prefect and Secretary** wrote:

'Be open to the challenge offered by the three significant words of the theme of the Synod... communion, participation, mission. Pray, reflect, discuss and share your experiences, insights and desires. Do it with the freedom of those who place their trust in God and are thus able to overcome timidity, a sense of inferiority or worse still, reproaches and complaints.'

All of this is very affirming for us as a Congregation in this time of generative conversations, scenario-building, Chapters and co-creating the future.

We encourage participation in the various processes within our Congregation and also with regard to the Synod.

Survey on Edmund Rice Mission and Ministry

The CLT has continued to work with the Working Party which was asked several months ago to explore possibilities for collaboration across Edmund Rice mission. The Working Party carried out an online survey which engaged about 230 participants, about half of whom were Brothers.

The fruits of that process have now been formulated in a Report. Participants who expressed an interest in continuing to be involved in further conversations have now received a letter from the CLT, as well as a copy of the Report.

The CLT has asked the Working Party to convoke several international Zoom conversations in the coming months, based on the key questions raised during the survey. It is hoped that in that process the key people to carry the process forward can be identified.

Our community

Brother Tony Shanahan (Congregation Secretary) has returned to Rome after a break in Ireland so we expect to be a community of five for the remainder of the year.

Season of Creation



We encourage all to participate in the annual Season of Creation which runs from September 1 to October 4, Feast of Francis of Assisi.

Dramatic global events continue to show that the effects of human activity on climate are producing dire situations.

Several websites offer suggestions that could be used for community prayer.

Beatification



October 6 marks the 25th anniversary of the Beatification of **Blessed Edmund Rice**. We encourage communities and provinces to mark the occasion and to engage others in Edmund Rice ministry where possible.

Best wishes to you on this feast of the birthday of Mary.

Hugh, John, Peter and Richard.