



XLVIII CAPITULUM GENERALE



CHAPTER
DOCUMENT

General Congregation

**48th General Chapter
of the Order
of the Pious Schools**

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**48th General Chapter
of the Order
of the Pious Schools**

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Prot.S.080.2022

TO THE WHOLE OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS
THE GRACE AND PEACE OF GOD, OUR FATHER

Dear brothers and sisters,

With joy and thanksgiving to God, our Father, the General Congregation of the Order approves and publishes the chapter document "*Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit*", a mature and valuable fruit of the 48th General Chapter of the Order of the Pious Schools.

The document you have in your hands has been the subject of a long work, in deeply synodal dynamics. For more than a year, both the capitulars and the various communities of the Order were working on the various themes that make up this document, which reached the chapter assembly enriched with many contributions.

Over the course of three weeks, the capitulars reflected on it in depth and gave it the definitive orientation from which it is presented to the whole of the Pious Schools.

It is a document structured in **four nuclei**. Of these, the first is the configurator and axis of all the others: the *centrality of the Lord Jesus* in the Piarist Life and Mission. The other three reflect in a renewed and inspiring way three fundamental aspects for all of us: the *challenge of continuing to build Pious Schools*, the reflection on the *Piarist religious we need and, finally, the commitment to an irreplaceable Ministry*.

These four nuclei group and guide the eleven **Keys of Life** that the 48th General Chapter proposes to the Pious Schools, and each of these "Keys of Life" is developed in various **Lines of Action**, all of them duly approved and prioritized by the General Chapter.

It is a very rich material, which little by little we will have to read and work, both personally and communally, so that it bears fruits, those that the Lord is granting us in his mercy.

Our challenge is to turn the rich contents and proposals of the General Chapter into Life and Mission. Let us work for it and let us ask for the blessing of the Lord for this new sexennium of the history of the Pious Schools.

We join in the prayer of the entire Order, shared throughout the General Chapter: *Come, Holy Spirit. Help us to contemplate life and the world with the eyes of Jesus. Make us humble and faithful disciples of the Lord, like Mary, our Mother, and like Calasanz, our founder. Through your intercession, may the General Chapter of our Order be welcomed and received for the Glory of God and the Usefulness of our Neighbor. AMEN.*

Receive a fraternal embrace



Fr. Carles Gil, Assistant General for Europe
Fr. Julio Alberto Álvarez, General Assistant for America
Fr. Felicien Mouendji, Assistant General for Africa
Fr. József Urbán, Assistant General for Asia
Fr. Pedro Aguado, Father General

Rome, April 17, 2022, Easter of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

*In the Church of God
and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
Religious Institutions
tend to the fullness of Charity
as to their true end,
through the exercise of their own ministry... (CC. 1)*

400 years ago, Calasanz presented to the Church this text with which his Constitutions began. Today, we, the Piarists from all over the world, gathered in General Chapter in Mexico, embrace this experience of our Holy Father and wish to update it by inviting our religious and lay brothers and sisters to live it in a creative, courageous and passionate way.

The Piarist way of being and doing urges us. We have lived in the Chapter a true event of communion. We wish to share it through this document that gathers much of the hopeful Piarist reality on which we have been able to reflect and examine.

In this publication that you have in your hands we have tried to capture how, **under the guidance of the Holy Spirit**, we feel called to focus our lives on Jesus Christ, recognizing Him as Way, Truth and Life of our vocation. We accept this call as a community. We see a rich diversity and also a deep communion when we live and relate to one another in the truth and freedom that comes from being called by the love of the Father. This experience of being loved, impels us to share our charism and Saint Joseph Calasanz as a necessary good in our time, which enlightens and gives life especially among children, adolescents and young people, mainly the poor.

In the Church of God, we, the Pious Schools consolidate the inspiration and mission received by welcoming *synodality*, not only as a working methodology but as a shared process of discernment and a style of living as Church. We have noted the plurality of the Order and we feel challenged to live interculturality as a sign of the times. Our witness of fraternal life and a strong desire for *inculturation* are evidence of our respect and appreciation of each of the contexts in which we live.

Over the last few years, we consider it positive to have worked on the basis of the Order's Keys of Life. These have generated a culture that identifies us, makes us live in communion and allows us to grow in a mindset that enhances and animates our life and mission. The General Chapter has underlined the importance of living our charism in a shared way. The processes of *Participation*, especially the Fraternity, are a growing reality that we must encourage, care for and consolidate.

We have seen with joy the fruitfulness and relevance of our charism, both in the historical places and in the new foundations. Therefore, we need to diligently care for our presences through a serious and generous dynamism of *sustainability*: audacity, solidarity and a healthy realism will help us in this area.

Religious Institutions tend to the fullness of Charity as their true end. This end is what drives us to promote processes of vocation and formation that generate the Piarist that our world, especially children and young people, needs.

The Directory of Ongoing Formation, which has been worked on in recent years and which gathers the contributions of all the demarcations, shows us a horizon towards which we can move forward with enthusiasm. A serious, responsible and committed formation of religious will help us to renew our passion for the mission and will make it possible for us to bear an appealing witness.

We noted at the Chapter that the Culture of Vocations generates vitality in the Order. We are called to promote new vocations which are a treasure for which we are grateful to the mercy of the Father. At the same time, this brings with it a responsibility to care for, enrich and make possible processes and people who accompany those who feel called. The words of Calasanz in his Constitutions

resonate with us in this time of jubilee: *“As this task that we bring in our hands is of such transcendence and demands people endowed with the greatest charity, patience and other virtues, we will have to consider with great attention those who must be admitted or excluded from formation for our ministry.”* (CC. 6).

Through the exercise of their own ministry. At this historic moment when Catholic education is being questioned in many countries, we live our ministry as irreplaceable. The intuition of Calasanz, creator of the Christian popular school in Europe, is today our point of reference to recreate the school for all in Piety and Letters in our presences. The development of our ministry, in spite of the present difficulties, is proving to be very fruitful. New mission platforms are appearing which enrich and complement the school reality. We feel called to strengthen our identity in all our works, also as a contribution to the Church and to the field of popular education.

A decisive commitment to education and evangelization leads us to the necessary innovation and to listening to young people. The group of young people who took part in the Chapter showed us the way: witness to evangelical life, coherence, accompaniment, and presence.

The XLVIII General Chapter of the Pious Schools wants to be Good News for those who collaborate, participate, and devote themselves to the Piarist mission. It is also for all the children and young people we serve and will serve in the future.

Trusting in our Mother, the Virgin Mary, teacher, refuge and protection of our Order, we hope to pass on this passionate experience of our charism today.

CORE 1

The Centrality of Jesus Christ

CONFIGURING CORE: To walk with Christ, from the centre of our vocation

To delve deeper into our Piarist spirituality and the processes of growth in a consecrated life centred on Christ for an integral, balanced, mystical and prophetic living of our vocation.

The 48th General Chapter of the Pious Schools approves the present DECLARATION in which it shares the conviction that, in order to live processes of growth in Consecrated Life from our spirituality, we need and want to contemplate the life of Jesus of Nazareth, his experience narrated in the Gospels being the framework according to which we can live **processes of growth in a Consecrated Life** centred on Christ from an integral, balanced, mystical and prophetic living of our vocation.

At the pace of Jesus

And while they were there, the time came for Mary to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Lk. 2:6-7)



1. **The joy and availability of poverty.** We are 'Poor of the Mother of God' and we reflect our joy by joining the Magnificat of our mother of whom we feel we are true children. Recovering the simplicity of our life which is visible in the places where we have our houses, our simple lifestyle and an austere witness of life helps our sense of sonship. More than an option for the poor, we are called to be little ones who can identify with the little ones, poor with the poor, especially, by lowering ourselves to the children who continue to call and summon us. This living out of poverty generates dynamisms of effective presence among the needy, it demands from us the care and defence of life from its beginning to its end, and the care of the common home through concrete initiatives with the environment and the use of resources in solidarity. (*Constitutions 19, 64, 66, 67, 75*).



Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against and a sword will pierce through your own soul also, that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." [...] And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him. (Lk. 2:34-35, 39-40)

2. **The witness of life and ongoing formation.** The most effective evangelising dynamism is the testimony we give by our own life. We are called to be a 'sign', personally and communally, and to show evangelical authority by combining word and life. Gestures, words and deeds give us credit, even if they involve a certain social discomfort: the prophetic dimension of our vocation must be manifested in the evangelical courage of our words and actions. Compassion, in the style of Jesus, with ourselves and with others, helps us to live coherently. A successful formation in the different personal dimensions will help us to grow on a path of integrity and wisdom (holiness) in the image of our holy founder, offering a clearer image of Christ. (*Constitutions 22 and 89*).

And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." And he said to them, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man. (Lk. 2:48-52)



- 3. Discernment and self-knowledge.** Both experiences are a way of life open to God's presence in us, in our history and in reality. To live the dynamism of discernment is to be open to the Holy Spirit in our lives. Personal and communal accompaniment, a faith-filled reading of reality, consensual decisions in community, and a cordial closeness to the Word of God and to the sacraments will be best ways for us to grow. The study of the writings of and spiritual empathy with our founder will be of decisive help. (*Constitutions 42, 77 and 121*)

There was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Lk. 4:17-21)



- 4. Consecrated for the mission and a ministry of our own.** We live our consecrated life and all its dimensions according to the Piarist mission to which we have been called: to proclaim the Gospel to the little ones. We are in our environments the very memory of Christ. The living of the vows shows us to be available, united and centred on others; we offer a testimony of gratitude, assuming the logic of grace, deploying our talents in the

service of our own ministry: to evangelise children and young people, especially in situations of various forms of poverty, by means of a liberating education (from ignorance and sin) that brings about personal and social transformation. The newness with which we face the mission and the correctness of placing each one according to his or her gifts will enable us to live a happy life. (*Constitutions* 2, 3, 7, 18, 85, 90)



When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.” [...] And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men.” And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. (Lk. 5:4-5.10-11)

- 5. We renew our mission and we renew our response of vocation.** We are invited by Jesus to continue to cast our nets ‘in his word’, leaving aside the tiredness and logic of our projects. A renewed mission will necessarily lead us to go out and populate the existential peripheries with our charism; by updating our vocation we renew our response. We have to rediscover personal and community itineraries of renewal of our mission, taking into account the new reality of the communities (intergenerational, intercultural, ‘inter-vocational’, with few members...) and the new personal reality (large number of elderly or young people, unfinished formation processes, aspirations of vocations...). (*Constitutions* 103).



As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.” And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, arise.” And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother. (Lk. 7:12-15)

- 6. We exercise mercy and promote the health of children/young people.** Our consecration has a healing dimension, we are chosen by grace to be instruments of grace. The more channels we provide to express and live mercy, the more our consecration takes root and grows. We are called to express this mercy, in the first place, in our own home, with our brothers and sisters in the community, being creative in living it every day. The second recipients are also the children, adolescents, and young people we serve. This closeness and compassion manifested in words, gestures, deeds and prayer mean that while death is at work in us, life grows in others. (*Constitutions 18, 26, 28, 93*)

Jesus went on through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means. (Lk. 8:1-3)



- 7. We Piarists, religious and lay.** We have discovered that our charism belongs to the People of God, which is why we experience that the participation and experience of the laity at our side enriches and strengthens our consecrated life. Facilitating meetings and sharing of life, spirituality, and mission between the two vocations is a sign of the times that we must consider, care for, and foster for mutual enrichment, making possible a choral witness of the charism and fraternal correction. In this way, our communities are open to meetings and fraternal sharing with all those who come close to our charism, making the Piarist Christian Community visible. The Fraternity of the Pious Schools is a privileged space to live this communion. (*Constitutions 29, 36, 94*).



Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” (Lk. 9:33b-35)

- 8. Mysticism and contemplation.** To be consecrated is to be called by a choice of love to make visible an aspect of God. Our baptism connects us to the experience of God’s love, the source and goal of all we do. We increase and consolidate this experience by cultivating the intimate and personal relationship with God in prayer, in its mediations (poor, brothers, Church-community, sacraments, those who exercise the service of authority ...) and in the contemplative gaze of a world filled with the seeds of the Word. Daily listening to and acceptance of the Word (in life and in scripture) gives us a mystical sense in our action by which we actualize the love of God in all creation. (*Constitutions 16, 40, 42, 48*)



Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” (Lk. 18:15-17)

- 9. Blessing and spiritual childhood.** Our consecrated life is embedded in giving benediction (which literally means, ‘saying good’): with our words and our deeds we speak well of God and those who are in contact with us also receive God’s blessing (God’s “saying good”). Not only do we impart blessing but in our condition as ‘little ones’ in the spiritual life, we are recipients of it. For this reason, we welcome the recommendation of Our Holy Father Calasanz to make us ‘like two-year-old children who do not know how to take two steps without stumbling’ (EC 912, August 4, 1628), accompanying the little ones in prayer and lowering ourselves to give them light, making our

prayer resemble the experience of the little ones. They are still the beacons of our path. (*Constitutions 18 and 19*).

“Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” And he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed, “Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” (Lk. 22:40b-42)



10. Reality and God’s will. We accept reality as coming from the hand of God, for which we make the Passion of the Lord the constant object of our meditation, patiently waiting for the grace to be granted to us to live in hope all that happens. The Paschal Mystery is the event on the basis of which we interpret our world. We are therefore faithful to personal and communal discernment, to become ministers of future hope, and we open ourselves to all the people, experiences and realities that can offer us a clearer vision of God’s will. (*Constitutions 24, 41, 42, 77*).

“Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?” (Lk. 24:29b-32)



11. Eucharist and lifestyle. Our life is nourished by the Paschal Mystery that we daily realise in the Eucharist. Our celebrations are open to all who wish to be nourished, enabling, as far as possible, the participation of companions, families, and students, living it with them or serving as priests to the people entrusted to us. The celebration of the Eucharist is for us an itinerary of life, incorporating into our daily life what we ritually celebrate: welcome, forgiveness, listening to the Word, offering of our gifts, life given, thanksgiving and sending-mission. In this way, we try



to live the experience of the Good Shepherd, distancing ourselves from any kind of clericalism. (*Constitutions 27, 28, 46*).

All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. (Acts 1:14)

12. Fraternal life and the Virgin Mary. Piarist fraternity is evident in the cordial acceptance of our way of life proposed in our Constitutions. We update it by making our own the proposals of the General and Provincial Chapters, and in this way, we build the Pious Schools and we grow in the mentality of the Order. We make our fraternal life grow in welcome, affection and closeness to the other communities of the demarcation; we express it through the witness of the local community united with the communities of the Fraternity of the Pious Schools and we feel that we are a body, united to the Virgin Mary, the protection of our Order. (*Constitutions 25, 36, 76*).



Following this itinerary, at the pace of Jesus, we will be approached by young people with a deep desire for eternal life (Lk. 18, 18ff) and it will be our opportunity to invite them to come and see. This mutual approach between young people and religious will awaken in many a desire to live what they discover in us. Open in this way to the new generations, we walk towards a new 'Pentecost of the Piarists' that creates in us the communion necessary to carry forward with strength the mission of the Piarists in the world, overcoming fears and barriers of all kinds.

1st key of life

Piarist spirituality

*“To delve deeper into the experience of our own spirituality,
taking care of the most significant actions”.*

The lived experience of our Piarist identity depends on the deep and loving knowledge of our Holy Founder, Saint Joseph Calasanz. From the very bosom of his family he received the imprint that gave spiritual and human solidity to his whole life. He entered into intimacy with God and was so enriched that in the midst of the severe tribulations through which he and his Institute passed, he knew how to stand strong in faith and hope. In what way is his spiritual experience still relevant for the Piarists today?

We need to set out our spirituality in clear terms:

- a. As a path of holiness.** Our spirituality as a process of growth, integration and witness, a guarantee of a future of hope.
- b. Cultivating the spirit of prayer** in the ordinariness of our life and ministry.
- c. Grounded by synodality**, which implies a spirit of communion and attentive listening to the brothers, in order to welcome the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- d. With coherent projects, in lines of life and action** that respond to the needs of the Church and the world today.
- e. A spirituality that values communion and solidarity** among men and women.
- f. A spirituality shared** with the Fraternity and with the lay men and women who feel called to participate in the same charismatic reality.

- g. A spirituality that calls the Piarist to be a prophet** in places where children suffer.
- h. A spirituality that values nature –in terms of an integral ecology–**, respects it and teaches to respect it and take care of it.

We find in Saint Joseph Calasanz a process of “*kenosis*”, of dispossession, in imitation of the Crucified Master, on the path of humility and poverty, emptied of himself, to be filled with love and dedication to God and to his neighbour. This “*kenosis*”, applied to situations of interculturality, shows us that, in order to welcome a brother or sister from another culture, we must follow the same process of Jesus in his incarnation.

How to make the spiritual experience of Calasanz more enriching and creative in the new contexts of the Pious Schools? We need to delve into the following notes of our spirituality:

- a. A **Christ-centred spirituality**, giving special emphasis to the passion and death of Jesus, as the maximum expression of his love and dedication for all of us, for it is there that his love for us is manifested in its greatest intensity.
- b. A **spirituality attentive and docile to the promptings of the Spirit**.
- c. A **spirituality of listening to the Word of God** that comes to us through the Sacred Scriptures, the liturgy, meditation and personal reflection, always attentive to reality and the signs of the times.
- d. A **spirituality of service**, which lowers oneself to give light to children and young people, and from there, builds communion.
- e. A **spirituality of communion** with our brothers and sisters and with society.
- f. A **sacramental spirituality**, which highly values the celebration of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, gifts of the Lord to his Church.
- g. A **Marian spirituality**, which sees Mary as both educator and disciple of Jesus.
- h. An **ecclesial spirituality**, connected with the evangelising mission of the Church.

- i. A **spirituality in which prayer and the spirit of prayer** are an essential part of the life of the Piarist.
- j. A spirituality connected with life, incarnated in mission, and rooted in the Gospel.
- k. A **spirituality that cultivates the pedagogical virtues:** love, patience, gentleness and respect in the dealing with others, and the humility of those who know they are at the service of the little ones.
- l. A **dynamic spirituality** that is nourished by self-knowledge and is enriched by community life.
- m. A **spirituality that sustains the mission** and is, in turn, **enriched by the mission.**

The revitalization of the Pious Schools will come through the continuous formation in Piarist spirituality of the religious and lay people. One thing is clear: a good knowledge of our spirituality is fundamental for the Piarists in the exercise of their mission.

As followers of Calasanz, we must delve deeper into the meaning of Piarist spirituality; bet on a spirituality lived in a real way and as a condition for good Pedagogy and Pastoral Care for Vocations; make known the life of our Holy Founder and go deeply into it through the original sources; revitalize the experience of community prayer and meditation in common; live a joyful spirituality among children that awakens the desire to be Piarists, for the greater glory of God and the benefit of our neighbours.

Lines of action

1. To cultivate spiritual accompaniment for a better understanding of God's will in one's own life and a better knowledge of oneself.
2. To work on processes that facilitate and enrich personal prayer and community prayer.
3. To educate ourselves by meeting with children and young people, preferably the poor.
4. To live the Trinitarian experience of Calasanz, centred on Jesus Christ, attentive to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and with a great sense of Church.

5. To live the Marian dimension of our spirituality.
6. To take care of the liturgical and sacramental experience.
7. To embody spirituality in the process of expansion and consolidation of the Order.

2nd key of life

Community Life

“To renew our Community Life and take special care of the central aspects underlined by our Constitutions”.

Joined together by a bond of love which the Father gave us and by the same Piarist vocation into a community of faith imitating the way of life which Jesus carried out with His disciples and which the early Church together with Mary also followed, we become, in some way, ministers of hope of the kingdom to come and of fraternal union among all people. (C25)

Today we Piarists, driven by the love of Christ according to the founding charism, live in families. Following the lifestyle of Christ with his disciples and of the early Church with Mary, we are a sign of fraternity in a fragmented world. Our community life makes our consecration visible and concrete: loving our brothers and sisters to the full, sharing everything, and joining together to discern the God’s will.

Our mission, lived with passion and joy, enriches and renews community life. In the same way, our fraternal life strengthens and makes fruitful our ministry among children and young people. What we are and what we do as Piarists thrive and are strengthened in a healthy community environment. The Lines of Action that we propose are intended to help in the fostering of this community reality.

Lines of action

1. To work in a special way on some keys that today are more urgent for the renewal of our community life. Including:
 - communities that are open and *capable of welcoming*;
 - communities that are *schools of prayer*;

- communities that are committed to the construction of a *new Piarist subject* formed by religious and laity;
 - communities that care for and accompany the *vocation process* of each religious or lay Piarist.
2. To reaffirm the central role of the community Eucharist; and also the community meeting, prepared and shared. We must work to recover this dynamic in all communities, on the path of synodality that we wish to follow.
 3. To take care of the pastoral leadership of the local superior in his mission and in the accompaniment of each of the religious.
 4. To follow the Lord in community, as a place of sharing faith, vocation, life and mission.
 5. To promote integration between the 3 projects: personal project (the call to be a Piarist), community project and presence project.
 6. To facilitate a lifestyle of all communities in such a way that the fundamental keys we want to live are real in all of them (accompaniment, shared life and faith, community meetings, etc.)
 7. To move towards “communities of communion”, in which Piarists who live in different situations can share their life and vocation in new and creative ways.

CORE 2

The construction of the Pious Schools

Our Order and the Pious Schools as a whole live and walk in a context of profound changes and transformations that oblige us to a careful and attentive discernment of the signs of the times. The construction of the Pious Schools requires from us a special attention to the changes that are taking place in our “Piarist culture”, in our processes and in our journey. Consequently, it will be good to discern the main processes of transformation that we are undergoing. By way of example, and without any desire to be exhaustive, the 48th General Chapter focused its attention on some of them. It will be important to bear them in mind, if we really want to contribute to a dynamism of construction of the Pious Schools faithful to the charism and to reality.

Our geographical and cultural change

There is no doubt that we are in a rapid process of change, which will bring with it many consequences. In all aspects and at all levels. The Order is growing rapidly in Africa and Asia, is undergoing a process of maintenance in America, and is decreasing in Europe. This change in the centre of gravity has various consequences; interculturality is growing, the languages in which we communicate are changing, new horizons of mission are opening up, new ways of attending to the works of the Order are being sought. And in each place we are faced with specific challenges, which require specific strategies.

Among them, some emerge with special clarity: to impulse the knowledge of the real life of the Pious Schools in all continents; to reflect deeply and systematically on interculturality and inculturation in our world, our Church, and our Order; to favour the mis-

sionary experience of those in Initial Formation; to guarantee the adequate Piarist identity shared in all the demarcations, especially in the newly established ones.

The path shared with lay people

The process is proving to be very rich and creative. It is clear to us that the proper and orderly relationship between religious and laity as an institutional path is not something optional, but is a clear and unambiguous commitment of the Pious Schools, consolidated in the Directory of Participation approved by the 47th General Chapter.

Some particularly significant options emerge. Among them, we cite two: to advance in the implementation of the Piarist Presence model as one of the best strategies to renew our institutional culture in terms of Participation and to promote the creation of the Piarist Christian Community, in accordance with the Presence model.

Culture of accompaniment of people and communities

The 48th General Chapter was very clear and decisive in its commitment to the promotion of accompaniment processes at every age and in every life cycle, with special emphasis on that of young adult religious. In this sense, it is especially important to take care of the formation processes of the rectors of our religious communities, highlighting this dimension of their service to the brothers.

Culture of projects

To go forward in the development of the Piarist Presence Projects of each Demarcation and, based on them, the projects of the mission teams and communities will produce, step by step, a greater dynamic of co-responsibility among all the people and communities linked to the Pious Schools.

Living a life of poverty and the option for the poor

The shared living of our Piarist vocation as “Poor of the Mother of God” has marked our history and our choices. Also the most recent when it comes to starting new paths and works. We are aware that

this orientation is fundamental for our process of expansion and the consolidation of our demarcations, and a valuable evangelising witness in the societies in which we are inserted. Therefore, we wish to reaffirm this option, to feel ourselves instruments and agents of social change towards justice and peace as a key priority in our Culture of Order.

Networking and communication

These are central aspects of our transformation process. For this reason, we wish to promote the integration of every Piarist relationship and network in the great network that the Order and the Pious Schools as a whole represent: Network of Parishes, Calasanz Movement, ITAKA-Escolapios, and other networks that the demarcations can contribute.

Permanent novelty of Calasanz

We seek a constant re-reading of Calasanz, which helps us to move towards a new vision of his figure, options and charism, in order to better discover what we are called to today. We wish to make Calasanz known as the great promoter of social transformation and of the Church through education.

The 48th General Chapter of the Order worked on four major “Keys of Life” in the context of reflection on the “*construction of the Pious Schools*”: **Interculturality and Inculturation; Synodality; Integral Sustainability and Participation.**

3rd key of life

Interculturality and Inculturation

“To make decisive progress in the dynamics of a Pious Schools Going Forth that are intercultural and missionary”.

Interculturality and inculturation are two simultaneous dynamisms that profoundly challenge the Church and the Order in their task of proclaiming the Gospel. Our reflection seeks to articulate some basic aspects that can help us understand how we, the members of the Pious Schools, can respond, personally and in community, to these challenges.

The approach taken by this document is marked by the conviction that interculturality is a theologically relevant issue, or something that is relevant for faith, for our relationship with God (in Latin languages, “teologal”). In other words, we are facing something that, if we understand it from faith, connects us with life, with reality, with history, with others, in such a way that it becomes something culturally enriching and that nourishes this same faith.

Connecting interculturality with the inculturation of the Gospel is, in itself, an interpretative act that expresses and confirms our vision of interculturality as a dynamism of theological relevance. To put it another way, the fundamental message that this document aims to convey is that interculturality calls the Pious Schools to a theological understanding of this fact, which inevitably leads to a renewed self-understanding.

Once we perceive the theological importance of interculturality, we cannot help but feel compelled to contemplate in a new way what Calasanz lived and what he called forth. It is a rereading of our charism. It is this re-reading of our charism that we, Piarists, are called to do.

The intimate relationship between interculturality and inculturation

Understanding Interculturality as something theologically relevant means looking at diversity as a blessing, learning to accept contingencies and indefiniteness, and embracing the invitation to create alliances and walk the path of incarnation.

The idea of somehow connecting interculturality and inculturation appeared already in the subsequent debates after the Second Vatican Council on the proper use of terms such as acculturation, the evangelization of cultures, the incarnation of the Gospel in indigenous cultures, inculturation or interculturality.

Significantly, it was suggested that to describe what is happening when the Gospel is proclaimed it is preferable to use the word “interculturality” rather than “inculturation”, adding that interculturality is something typical of the original form of Christianity. Looking at Calasanz, we can reach the same conclusions, pregnant with theological relevance, regarding the relationship between interculturality and inculturation and their understanding. Opening himself – and creating an institution, a community that, too, constantly opens itself – to the reality of the poor and of children, Calasanz inserted his life in the dynamism that today we can recognize as the double dynamism of interculturality and inculturation.

A Calasanctian reading of the theological relevance of interculturality

Interculturality is to be understood and lived, within the logic of inculturation, as kenosis. In this way, it is more than multiculturalism, because the people – and cultures – involved as well as their differences gain ultimate importance, become theologically (or “teologalmente”) relevant.

Interculturality is a never-ending process, because the goal pursued by it, in this theological understanding, eschatological. As such it is not only unattainable but, more importantly, constitutes a horizon that gives meaning to the cultural project of interculturality.

As a theologically motivated option, intercultural living - or the person living interculturally - accepts that there is only one path open: that of time and history. The acceptance of history implies the acceptance of contingencies, of diversities, including generational differences. It is important for us Piarists to see that the task of interculturality consists in transmitting to the next generation a culture that is open, a tradition that is a creative force, a way of living that opens spaces for the different, the new, the “other” that the new generations are.

In this horizon, the hardships of living interculturality become acceptable because they gain meaning. Among these hardships is the fundamental difficulty intrinsic to the task of overcoming the illusion that understanding the other is easy. This illusion is dangerous because it can inadvertently lead to integralism. The recognition of otherness is never to disappear if we really want to live interculturally. Important areas of this recognition are the safeguarding of the public or community character of our works and the effort we must make not to build fundamentalist systems or organizations, but to keep them open to others and the world.

Invited to pursue interculturality in this theological understanding, we are called to make a “mystical reading” of human reality or culture, but in such a way that it does not become a-historical: while experiencing the intimate connection between nature and grace, we are called to walk on earth, step by step, patiently, trusting in God, creating processes of time, not conquering spaces. In this way, we are liberated from the delusional thought that this process depends on us, while at the same time not eliminating the tensions or concerns necessary to enter into fellowship with our brothers and sisters and to commit ourselves to them.

The intimate connection between grace and nature, or in Calasancian terms, between Spirit and Letters, invites us to discover and understand the principles to follow, the structures to be built, the paths to be travelled towards the construction of intercultural life

in accordance with what the human family has understood so far in respect. Teaming up with others and joining forces with them, not only in the specific areas of our ministry, but also in the general understanding of our humanity, is part of interculturality.

The Calasanctian “why” of Interculturality: “Reformatio”

The General Chapter invites the Pious Schools to see, to discover that the “why” (the purpose, the cause) of interculturality is connected, even identical, with the goal that Calasanz set for his community and work, that is, the “*Reipublicae christanae reformatio*” (cf. Const. 5).

In other words, what we propose is that we connect and understand interculturality as the way in which the reform of the Church and of society is to be realized (to avoid uniformity and totalitarianism, including fundamentalist theocracies or integralism) and also as the humanly possible and achievable realization of this goal of reform, or of the unity of the Church and of humankind in general (which is the evangelization of all peoples).

In this way, we will understand interculturality –and all the tasks that it entails– as the path and the achievable objective of “*Reformatio*”, which is our *raison d’être*. Moreover, we discover that a central Calasanctian or Piarist theme emerges here. It is the theme of learning: change through learning, renewal through learning.

It is a renewal that never ends, a reform of which we never reach the end. Often, we talk about the importance of a second conversion in life, which usually happens to the mature person. It is this conversion that we can discover at this point, and which, in fact, consists in realizing that what we need is a conversion that never ends, a conversion that continues throughout one’s life.

Interestingly, in the history of the Church, the reform movements that ultimately proved to be unsuccessful were, as it were, impatient. They failed to cope with the tensions that renewal – reform – actually implies, in the sense that they assumed it would take place within the timeframe of their lives. Importantly, all these failed reforms broke with Rome. Those that did not, also maintained an “eschatological patience”, that is, they knew that what is possible is a

continuous reform, a continuous rebirth. We are called to a continuous Passover. Something we confirm when we participate in the Passover of Jesus in the Eucharist.

This conversion, more than a purely theoretical study, presupposes intellectual efforts, since it is inseparable from the understanding of the meaning of what one is living and experiencing. It is this level of understanding and this kind of intellectual work that is really meant by study, by learning. And if study, learning, is understood and exercised in this way, we will also understand that we can only receive new truths intellectually –and the Truth spiritually– if we are open socially and institutionally. In other words, if the spaces we have created are open and characterized by the dynamism of otherness at the social and institutional level.

The reform to which Calasanz invites us is this: to convert continually, every day, day after day. To change, to learn, to learn to change and to convert, personally and communally, corporately, institutionally. To live in a continuous Passover with Jesus, to be continually reborn. Intercultural life belongs to this project, it is even identical to it. Perhaps a good synthesis of what we need is “*to inculturate the charism by means of intercultural communities*”.

Some paths that we are invited to travel

Conceived as the realisation of the inculturation of the Gospel –which is also its inner impulse–, interculturality gives us the opportunity to revisit and thus better understand not only the dynamisms that were at play in what Calasanz called into being, but also his whole enterprise. In short, it helps us to reread our charism. Consequently, the theme of interculturality helps us in the discernment we need to take a new look at ourselves, at the culture we have, and to decide what needs to be changed and what directions to take.

We have a series of “*options for reflection*” below, which identify a number of important points. We point out some that seem to us to be the most significant, and which we will try to synthesise - at a later stage - in a proposal for Lines of Action.

1. The “***reformatio***” as Calasanz understands it in a holistic, integral sense, which implies **personal conversion, institu-**

tional renewal, and conceptual development, invariably occurs through interculturality. It comes about through “coming down” (“*abajarse*”, “lowering oneself”), through “going forth” (“*en salida*”, living in “going out”). There is no other way. Or, to put it positively, this is the way. It is really a conversion, a “metanoia,” because it is a certain way of thinking, seeing and functioning, and as such, it is cultural, in the broadest sense of the word. In short, “*reformatio*” comes about through entering into a relationship that is intercultural.

2. **“Conversion”** –or metanoia, as we have just mentioned– consists of a certain way of looking at our culture, a certain way of understanding it.
 - a. First, it asks us to understand our culture as something essentially unfinished, always in the process of construction. Our identity is not to be identified with the culture we have. **Calasanz calls us to recognize that we need to be open to the other, to be in constant construction of our culture, discerning the authentic in our charism, culture and history.**
 - b. This vision has far-reaching practical consequences that go beyond underlining the importance of openness, although, of course, openness remains a fundamental requirement. **We have to consider ourselves incomplete**, in need of the other; we need that look that recognizes the other as someone capable of making us what we are meant to be. We need to be in a **process of continuous learning**, in the process of learning (and re-learning) to be ourselves, relating to the other, to the different.
 - c. In this line, there are two important dynamisms in which we must enter. The first is to **“learn to learn”**. We are probably facing a fundamental challenge that has to do with our options for Ongoing Formation. The second is to discern what we must **“unlearn”**, because surely there are mechanisms and ways of functioning that are consolidated among us which we must be able to transform.
3. Interculturality as an expression and path of conversion, of metanoia, calls us to be in a **learning process that is essentially**

“experiential” (that is, it happens through life, through living). We need to be in an “experiential” relationship with the other. This suggests that the two significant dynamisms that have recently appeared in our ecclesial consciousness, those of “*synodality*” and “*going forth*”, need to be connected to each other and to what we have learned about interculturality. In other words, it seems that we need to be in a process of continuous learning, in the process of building a culture where the other is recognized as someone we need. Therefore, synodality is not simply an internal ecclesial process, but a way of relating to the other, and “going forth” (“being on the way out”) is not something external to our being Church.

4. Interculturality and inculturation are **different** but **complementary** dynamics. We can say that they are two sides of the same coin. Interculturality without inculturation produces “foreigners”, and the latter without the former tends to forget the processes whereby it is produced and consolidated.
 - a. **Interculturality is not the same as plurality.** It is not enough to acknowledge plurality. What is important are the dynamisms that make it possible for this diversity to become shared responses, common life, fraternal approaches, a witness of communion and dedication to the mission. Inculturation is a kenotic dynamic that is realized and incarnated in an intercultural way.
 - b. Inculturation is not simply about adapting to new realities, but about **loving them to transform them.** The Gospel is inculturated when it is placed in the cultural roots, to transform them, humanise them and open them to God.
 - c. Both need **training processes.** They are not “learned” spontaneously. Initial and Ongoing Formation must take all this into account.
 - d. Interculturality and inculturation must **permeate the life and mission of the Order.** They must reach the life of the communities, the dynamisms of formation, spiritual proposals, the way of understanding and living the charism, etc. They must be thought thorough and incorporated in an intelligent, shared and Calasanctian way into the life of the Pious Schools.

- e. **The critical discernment** of what we do and live must also be something very clear among us, to avoid accepting dynamics, styles and customs that can and should be changed, and that are even different – and perhaps contrary – to what we want to live as Piarist religious. Attention to the style of priesthood, to the dynamisms too much influenced by belongings, to the economic functioning, etc.
- f. It follows that we are called to learn to listen –that is, to develop listening as an attitude– but also to learn it as something cultural: we need to **build a culture capable of listening to the other**, to the voices that we have not heard so far, that we have not been able to perceive.
- g. We are called to learn not to silence people, not to ignore or dismiss them, but to be able to recognize them and, once recognized and empowered, to let them speak to us and interact with us. In this sense, we also must look for relationships, situations and events of the past that call us –honestly– to reconciliation. We must learn what reconciliation is, how to reconcile, how to go on our way together, how to reconnect.

With these reflections in mind, the 48th General Chapter of our Order agreed on six specific Lines of Action to be pursued during the sexennium.

Lines of action

1. That the Order gives a strong impulse to the project “Pious Schools Going Forth” as one of the keys from which we can move forward.
2. That both the Initial Formation programmes of our young people and the community programmes of intercultural communities include these topics in their concrete development and that missionary experiences are contemplated.
3. To promote the creation of intercultural groups of formators in such a way that it helps the daily concretion of intercultural dynamics and inculturation in the daily life in the houses of formation.

4. Deep and systematic reflection on interculturality in our world, our Church and our Order in a way that generates a better knowledge of the real life of the Pious Schools on all continents.
5. To promote in the Order a systematic reflection on the challenge of moving forward in communion out of and between different cultures, strengthening our capacity for listening and reconciliation.
6. During the six-year period, may the encyclical “Fratelli tutti” be worked on in all the regions, and may the various reflections and contributions serve to enable the General Congregation to offer concrete paths from which to grow in this spirituality of universal fraternity.

4th key of life

Synodality

“To live synodality as a path of renewal of our Culture of Order”.

“Synodality denotes the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel”.

The History of Salvation recounts, from the First Testament onwards, the experience of a People rescued and gathered by the Lord, always guided and accompanied by Him on their journey. This experience reaches its fullness in Jesus Christ who is Way, Truth and Life. In our time, the Pious Schools, an integral part of the same assembly, are called to this style of shared life and mission in a service especially meant for children, young people and the poor, for the construction of a world of justice and fraternity that God wants for all his children².

All members of the Church are called to be agents of evangelisation. This is an indispensable precondition for a new missionary energy³. In the same way, we in the Pious Schools want to grow in co-responsibility. We want to involve all the members of our great family more and more in a common and continuous discernment. In this way we can walk together in the light of the Lord and be able to manage a diversity that is real and positive in our communities, districts, in the Church itself and in society, mutually enriching each other with the gifts and charisms proper to each vocation.

1 International Theological Commission, “Synodality in the life and mission of the Church”, SVM1 70.

2 C11.

3 International Theological Commission, SVM1 9.

Starting from Calasanz

We value the decisions and orientations of our Holy Father who, in other names than the ones we use today, expressed his conviction about the need to live and function in synodality. It was clear for him that all members of the Order are needed according to their different specific vocations, a theme which has been especially valued in the recent Church document⁴:

“Brothers are as necessary in our religion as are clerics and priests, for they all form one body. And one should not say to the other: I do not need your help. But in holy peace, with great merit, let each one work according to their aptitude for the pure love of God”⁵.

At different times, Calasanz exhorted them to listen to one another to discern together the voice of the Spirit, even at weekly meetings where they discussed everyday matters related to their ministry and to the common life at home:

“I am sure that the Holy Spirit will always show his will through someone”⁶.

“I would like that, at least once a week, you have a small meeting about school matters and how to improve them, listening to the opinion of all, because often the Holy Spirit speaks through the mouth of the one who is least expected”⁷.

In these exhortations on mutual listening, this conviction about the voice “of the one who is least expected”, that is, of the “simple”, the “naïve” as he also writes at other times, is remarkable:

“And since the Lord does not show partiality and usually reveals his secrets to the simple, we desire that the local ministers themselves, at least once a month in the oratory after prayer, discuss, in the presence of all, the good government of the house, listening to the opinion

4 International Theological Commission, SVMI 21: “Everyone plays an active part, though with varied roles and contributions”.

5 EP 3990, Cf. 1Cor 12,21.

6 EP 3198.

7 EP 132.

of each one to see what the Holy Spirit inspires⁸. For four eyes see better than two, and an abundance of counsellors brings salvation⁹.

“Let all be there and let all know and participate, through the weekly meeting, in what is being done. The Holy Spirit often speaks through the mouth of a simple person, especially if he is a devout one”¹⁰.

Our current synodal practices

Religious community

- a. The Local Community is a first and fundamental instance in the Piarist family; it is based on the communion of people and is strengthened by the co-responsibility, fidelity, and generous dedication of all in work and charity¹¹.
- b. We can say that our Constitutions associate with the community meeting some rather important aspects for our life: building authentic communities; discernment of the great questions of our life and mission; the development of co-responsibility and common action and our ability to review what we live and to improve it. In other words, a Piarist community life worthy of the name is not possible without the properly prepared and systematically held community meeting¹².
- c. The local superior has an important role to play, as do the other members, who help with specific tasks organised according to the realities of each place¹³.

Dynamics at the level of the Province and the Order

- a. The demarcational assemblies, the Provincial Councils, the provincial teams that coordinate the various areas of life and mission of the Pious Schools, the Provincial Chapters, etc., are profoundly synodal dynamics that are central to what we are.

8 Exhortation to Superiors RC 13, 47.

9 EP 1331. Cf. Prov. 11,14.

10 EP 2581.

11 C138 157, 160, 165.

12 C32, 134, 165 and 167.

13 C162, 163.

- b. In recent years, the “Piarist presence” model has grown significantly, which makes it easier to live and work in a more coordinated and shared way.
- c. We continue to make great progress through meetings, seminars, forums, commissions, etc., which contribute decisively to the consolidation of an Order mentality based on co-responsible belonging and others that the synodal dynamic itself will generate in the future.

Ministry

- a. As far as our ministry is concerned, progress has been made in overcoming styles of management based on the individual. Teamwork is gradually making its way among us, and is acquiring the status of a “culture” in our works and demarcations.
- b. Just as Church documents value the importance of pastoral councils in discerning and making joint decisions, new styles based on co-responsibility have emerged in the Pious Schools: secretariats, teams endowed with their respective projects and programs.
- c. We value positively the collaborative work with other educational, social, and public instances, which is currently being developed and is to be increased in the future.

Shared mission and participation

“Our religious will consider as brothers and co-operators all lay people who, with their pedagogical activity or any other kind of co-operation in our school community, participate in our educative apostolate. It is most important that we take mature care of them from the start”¹⁴.

“Always following the call of the Church, our Order will serve the missions “ad gentes” with its charism. Therefore, our religious and laity attached to us could be sent to help those peoples more in need of an evangelizing education”¹⁵.

- a. We are an ecosystem full of life, called to connect with the original sources of inspiration that enliven us, so that we can discern

14 R134.

15 R144.

while doing, be renewed while exercising, and discover while going out¹⁶.

- b. Thanks to the contribution of the generous work and creative reflection of so many people, lay and religious, the Calasancian charism has been enriched over the years. Now there are different modalities of participation, new ways for each person to find their place in the Piarist mission according to their own specific vocations.
- c. We believe that our Order must reflect on the role of women in the Church, in society and in the Pious Schools. A word from the Order promoting a reflection on the participation of women in the life of the Pious Schools and a development of this perspective seem to be something important and necessary, recognizing the work and fundamental presence in the educational, social, and pastoral action of our works.
- d. The Piarist Fraternity has an important role in the chapter processes of several demarcations and we can certainly make further progress in the integration of lay men and women in this. The challenge we face is to find a way to get everyone's input in the chapter processes.
- e. The Piarist Christian Community is a nucleus of life and ministry that continues to develop and shows how the Piarist mission is enriched by the diversity of vocations. The Piarist Presence, a concrete example of synodality, already has place in our law¹⁷. Today we have a new Piarist agent, and this also makes us think that in the future we will take more steps in this direction to respond with creative fidelity to the challenges of the new circumstances.

Initial and Ongoing Formation

“Through this integral education, we will collaborate with the Church and society in creating critical persons who will be able to distinguish earthly realities from a Christian perspective, to grasp the present social reality and to know how to accept and promote necessary change; to be open to a dialogue in the community, where the

16 Group Angel Ruiz. *Log in the Sources, share the life.*

17 R12.

*involved individuals, with mutual reverence, attentively listen to the opinions of others*¹⁸.

- a. In the Directory of Initial Formation, emphasis is placed on the importance of working within the human area on the attitudes necessary for mutual respect, dialogue, teamwork, community experience¹⁹.
- b. In some demarcations there are houses of formation where young people from very different backgrounds live together²⁰. There is also an interesting challenge in the demarcations made up of religious of different nationalities²¹. In addition, in those places where there seems to be more homogeneity, there are more and more international connections by virtual means, which are very useful to foster fraternal dialogue, language learning, cultural exchange and knowledge of the Order in various latitudes.
- c. These considerations for the formation of religious are equally important in the formation of lay people who share the Piarist mission.

Learning from the Piarist Synod of Young People

- a. The process of the Piarist Synod of Youth, during all its stages and levels, has helped us to value more the capacity for commitment and generosity of so many young people involved in the Piarist mission.
- b. Their perspectives, their closeness to other young people, their skills and their enthusiasm are key to the ministry of the Pious Schools if we know how to integrate it properly with the action of adults. Another quality that has caught our attention has been the ease with which they communicate and share in depth without linguistic or cultural differences being an impediment.

18 R106.

19 FEDE 68, 72, 76.

20 An example of this is the Juniorate of the Province of West Africa where the candidates are from six different nationalities y twenty ethnicities.

21 In the Province of Central America and the Caribbean there are religious of 11 nationalities and of 13 in the USA Puerto Rico.

- c. Among the issues most worked on so far have been: the qualification of the pastoral processes with continuity and follow-up (Calasanz Movement), the great need to be accompanied in their discernment, the relationship with God, volunteering, special attention to the poorest, communications and the assiduous formation required for these topics.

The synodal path proposed by Pope Francis

- a. Our Order welcomes as a gift of the Holy Spirit the synodal process opened by Pope Francis, a process which will be central to the life of the Church in the coming years.
- b. For this reason, the General Chapter exhorts the Order and all those who are part of our presences to participate in this process, bringing a Piarist outlook to the ongoing synodal process.

Lines of action

1. To renew our community life according to this synodal perspective, paying special attention to aspects such as: the shared Word, the care of the Eucharist and community discernment, frequent community meetings, the openness of our communities to the laity and especially to young people, and the linking of the community to the Piarist presence.
2. To establish mechanisms of reflection, decision, and shared action with young people, inspired by the synodal process that we have lived with them, that help us to walk more in common and to be closer to their aspirations and searches.
3. To design learning processes especially in relation to discernment, decision-making, fight against clericalism, etc. proposing mechanisms to guarantee synodality through the participation of the laity in the chapter processes in secretaries, mission teams, among others, so that this is not something optional, but real in all demarcations.
4. To encourage the participation of Piarists, religious and lay, in entities of the Church or civil society related to our mission (educational, social, pastoral...) where we can give our contribution.

5. To share between demarcations the formation experiences in which the Piarist identity of all the people involved in the mission is fostered.
6. To ensure authentic synodal processes in the study of common projects between demarcations, circumscriptions and other groupings.

5th key of life

Integral sustainability

“To advance significantly in the objective of achieving the integral sustainability of the Pious Schools”.

When we speak of sustainability in the Pious Schools, we not only mean an economic question, but the set of dynamics that contribute to the continuity in time of our mission in a Piarist presence. This is what we call integral sustainability, and it necessarily has to be based on a discernment that responds to these questions: Why? For what? For whom? Who? How?

We can define the integral sustainability of the Pious Schools *as the way in which it responds to its vocation within the Church, renewing its charismatic fidelity in the light of the signs of the times, guaranteeing the continuity of its specific mission, generating the structures, equipment, means and resources necessary for its survival in the most autonomous way possible.*

From this definition are derived the main elements that determine the sustainability of the Pious Schools:

1. **The human factor** that is a fundamental element to ensure the sustainability of a presence, for which reason other fundamental issues are important: vocation, formation, evangelical leadership, teamwork, Piarist subject, etc.
2. **Shared identity and a common subject** that guarantees co-responsibility, given that we share a common vocation and mission.
3. Responsibility of all in the use of the **economic resources** necessary for the development of each presence.

Today the Church and society, children and young people, call us to respond with greater generosity, and for this we need to be able to sustain our mission along these three lines: ***economic, personal/leadership and charismatic***. This implies making an effort of discernment in terms of charismatic fidelity of our works, elaborating clear projects, shared, accepted and assumed by all, starting from an analysis of our reality to identify what we want and what possibilities we have. And with a global, interrelated, networked, transnational, inter-demarcational (and even inter-congregation-al) vision, which favours growth in the sense of Order and Church.

For the Pious Schools, to be sustainable means to assume an inherent risk, since there is no such thing as an absolute and total security. To live is risky and to live evangelically is even more so. We are called to be on the frontier and this means that, on many occasions, we must make courageous and risky decisions in the present that help us to manage the unforeseen and the realities of the future, in order to continue with our mission of educating and evangelising children and young people, especially those most in need.

Sustainability in leadership/people and teams

Our mission, guided and protected by the Holy Spirit, is realized through people, religious and laity, who have been called to give their lives among children and young people. The Pious Schools not only need the shared subject to live this mission, but also leaders who are able to animate each of the presences of the Order.

However, on the one hand, we detect the need to take care of the sense of demarcation and of the Order, given that the interest of many religious is reduced to that which affects the place, the Priest presence in which they live. This, together with the fact that, in some areas, there is a lack of vocations, whether religious or lay, often means that there are presences that cannot be maintained in the future due to lack of people and leaders who are capable to carry on our identity.

On the other hand, we observe with enthusiasm and hope that there is a growing sensitivity among young religious to perceive the peripheries and to feel available to carry out their mission there, even if they are located outside their respective demarcations. This same

feeling has moved several lay people to form part of other presences outside their demarcation, in some cases of recent foundation, making the shared subject of the Piarist mission a reality.

We consider it essential for the future of the Order:

- a. To train charismatically identified leaders, so that they are capable of enabling other leaders through teamwork, who believe in what they propose, with a global mind and capable of caring for people with evangelical criteria.
- b. To set up inter-demarcational teams that can lead the projects of new presences, creating strong, significant community nuclei (religious, mixed or Fraternity communities) responsible for the mission in each presence.
- c. To create alliances with social, educational and ecclesial entities and to encourage all types of volunteering, growing in a culture of co-responsibility in the mission through assignments and entrustments to members of the Fraternity, members of Shared Mission Teams, etc.

Charismatic sustainability in mission

One of the great challenges of the Pious Schools is to maintain our charismatic identity in all our works, being aware that the works make the mission visible, but they neither exhaust nor define it, since the works can change, but our mission does not. Therefore, the Pious Schools are called to grow in identity, and to rediscover through the signs of the times, how to respond charismatically to the needs that arise in the present moment.

We sometimes come across educators who do not identify with us and works that are far removed from the criteria proper to a Calasancian school. Sometimes we tend to put the emphasis on need and urgency, and not so much on our identity, and although the claim is evangelical, the processes and steps do not always respect this principle.

It is also good to highlight how the *presence model* is being an effective work proposal to guarantee our identity in the works of each presence, and how the increasingly greater efforts in participation are generating people with a great identification with our charism,

open to other types of participation more committed to the faith, life and charism of Calasanz. We believe that this dynamic is fundamental to guarantee our future.

These situations call us to a discernment in terms of charismatic fidelity of our current presences and future foundations, designing and elaborating mission projects incarnated in reality, redefining our works in a presence model and in a dynamic of teamwork and networking.

We consider it essential for the future of the Order:

- a. To create inter-demarcational teams of charismatic identity, encouraging the formation and identification of religious and lay people.
- b. To strengthen and promote the new Piarist subject, the participation in the Pious Schools, the growth in Calasanctian identity, the consolidation of the Piarist Christian community, fostering the elements that allow us to grow in identity: Calasanz Movement, Shared Mission Teams, etc.
- c. To work more as a network, with well-planned projects in charismatic fidelity, with quality models and evaluation indicators, seeking a synergy of people, projects and resources, as a means to grow in our educational, evangelizing and transforming mission.

Economic sustainability

We are aware that the richness and plurality of the Order is vast and that the situation of the various demarcations is different, but we believe that it is important to realise that the economic factor is fundamental in the development of our mission and the future of the Order, and that it will determine the decisions to be taken in the development of our mission. It is essential to open a period of reflection that will allow us to determine what decisions we need to take at the economic level in order to guarantee the development of our mission and to ensure the identity of our works.

We note that the expenses of the religious, as well as the maintenance of the communities, tend to exceed the income generated by our work, especially in the older demarcations, while in the emerging presences there are many houses of formation and formandi,

with works that often do not generate the necessary income to maintain the economy of the demarcation.

On the other hand, educational and social demands require greater investment in the modernisation of facilities and buildings, which increases costs, while the reduction of students in some parts of the world, as well as the lower number of students who opt for our schools in crisis situations, make it more difficult to financially support these centres.

We highlight with joy and hope the expansion of the Order, in works among the poorest, as well as a greater commitment of the demarcations opting for the neediest students and for educational proposals that respond to the needs of this profile of students, as well as non-formal education works that aim to provide our service to the most vulnerable children and young people, which undoubtedly increases expenses and reduces profits.

We detect that in some cases our economic management models do not respond to the current criteria of efficiency, viability, and profitability, so we need to review this type of management models, as well as the lack of mentality in terms of projects/budgets, which are essential to seek a more efficient economic management of the new foundations.

All these elements have created doubts as to whether in the future the demarcations that have traditionally contributed more to the Treasury of the Order will be able to continue to maintain this contribution, which has led us to rethink the economic issue at the level of Order and study ways of generating sustainability in this sense.

We consider it essential for the future of the Order:

- a. To make use/profit from the use of spaces and structures that could be used for other purposes and benefits (renting of spaces, construction of facilities on empty or underused land, management of facilities for other purposes, etc.).
- b. To promote financial audits that help us be more efficient in our financial policies or investments.
- c. To guarantee corporate social responsibility, acting responsibly towards employees, towards those to whom our activity is addressed, towards society in general and towards the environment.

Lines of action

1. To carry out an economic and financial review organised by the corresponding circumscription throughout the sexennium, with the aim of supporting each other and sharing experiences that will help us to improve economic management. Both in the Order and in the demarcations, to work with non-deficit budgets.
2. To accompany all the demarcations, especially the emerging and newly founded ones, to help them discern possible paths to integral sustainability.
3. To move forward so that each demarcation has a good team of economic and financial advisors to help them with investments, the resource generation and budget control.
4. To carry out a reflection that allows the Order to obtain criteria to discern the growth (expansion) of the Pious Schools for the next sexennium, considering integral sustainability.
5. To enhance the possibilities of the Itaka–Escolapios network, Fundación Educación Solidaria, and others, as a means to grow in our educational, evangelizing and transformative mission; favouring participation in the mission of the Order.
6. To create in the demarcations offices to obtain resources dedicated to seeking aid and subsidies, developing projects that are made known and raise awareness through communication teams.
7. To continue to promote transparency, communication of goods in solidarity and joint decision-making in economic matters
8. To promote in the demarcations a renewal of our schools both in their infrastructures and in their pedagogical development. To promoting new trends and educational innovations to generate resources for the mission.
9. To prepare and sensitise the new Piarist generations about the economy according to the keys of the Order.

6th key of life

Participation

“To continue to advance in all the modalities that are part of the process of Participation in the Pious Schools”.

1. The Piarist charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit for the life and mission of the Church. This charism has remained alive and present until today in the Order of the Pious Schools, and now we can recognise it as becoming also visible and palpable in the life and vocation of many lay people who embody it and who seek ecclesial spaces and institutions to live it.
2. Participation in the Pious Schools is also called to be participation and communion in the Life and Mission of the Church, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from communion in the Trinity.
3. The Order has been confirming, in successive General Chapters, the path shared with lay people. The option for Participation and its consolidation in the General Directory of Participation of 2015 is not an optional path, but an institutional one, in the Pious Schools.
4. Participation in the Pious Schools is participation in the Piarist Charism (Spirituality, Fraternal Life and Mission). This Charism affects the life and vocation of lay people, with its various elements and nuances, in different ways:
 - a. By identifying with Piarist **spirituality**, finding the path of relationship with God in their becoming aware of their own gifts and limitations.
 - b. By joining together in different experiences of life and growth in **community**, which tend towards a greater service to those most in need.

- c. By engaging in an integral **mission** that proclaims Jesus as teacher and embraces education as the clue to a new world.
5. Participation in the Pious Schools is realised in various ways, according to the identity and vocation of each one, that is to say, according to the creation of the Father in each one. No form of Participation is better than another. Each one participates in a different way, according to one's own call or vocation.
 6. Nowadays, both Cooperation and Shared Mission are realities that allow us to maintain all our works and promote new ones. We assume the need to care for, accompany and promote all forms of Participation.
 7. Participation in the Pious Schools seeks to be lived within a Piarist Christian Community²². This Community manifests, shows and celebrates Participation in the Divine Life and in the Church. Likewise, this community is a place of discernment and making choices for the promotion of our life and mission. The development of a true Participation in the Pious Schools is favoured and enriched from belonging, according to the gift of each one, to this community.
 8. Within this community, the dynamism of Participation collaborates in the discernment of one's vocation and translates into sending and entrustment²³, in shared commitment and mission, and sometimes in ecclesial ministries defined and assumed in an institutional way. Charism provokes sending.
 9. Participation in the Pious Schools is lived in communion and in a network with other instances, areas, sectors of the Pious Schools at the local, provincial, and general levels.

22 The Fraternity of the Pious Schools. Clarification of concepts. *"The Piarist Christian community is the group of Christians who live their faith linked to a Piarist work or presence, being this their immediate reference of faith. In this community there are Piarist religious and members of the Fraternity of the Pious Schools, as well as other Christians linked to our presences or works"*.

23 We understand as entrustment the service that is provided to respond to a need that arises from the Order, Province or Piarist Christian Community. It provokes a mutual and co-responsible agreement, lived from the personal or community vocation.

10. The Fraternity of the Pious Schools, understood as a new Piarist subject (agent), represents a qualitative leap and a contribution for the Church in the construction of an ecclesiology of communion and participation, of discipleship and mission. Therefore, it must be cared for and constantly accompanied. It must be promoted as central to creative fidelity to the gift of God received by Calasanz, to the service of especially the poorest.
11. The Order recognizes the Fraternity as a new Piarist subject, that is, the Fraternity is also the bearer of the Piarist charism, together with the Order. Both subjects share life, mission and spirituality, with autonomy and co-responsibility.
12. It is essential that the Fraternity reach the maturity of a new Piarist subject with its own identity, capable of enriching the mission, life, and Piarist spirituality. If it matures properly, it will promote the development of all modalities and in a short time it will be able to help multiply the possibilities of mission in the Pious Schools.
13. The Order and the Fraternity share the mission in various ways. Some demarcations and fraternities choose to structure this co-responsibility through a network of shared mission such as Itaka-Escolapios. Through a network like this, resources, talents, and projects are shared, opening paths of evangelization and education in the most vulnerable contexts, addressing difficulties together and celebrating together the fruits and joys. In this way too, we can, on the basis of two vocations, build and live the same mission.
14. Participation is also promoted and developed from especially significant options of the Order and the Fraternity. Among them, we highlight:
 - a. The Calasanz Movement, which is a proposal of complete pastoral process called to accompany the development of vocation of children, young people and adults.
 - b. Continuous Prayer, which strengthens and educates the prayer life of children, young people, educators and Piarist presences.
 - c. The training processes in Calasanctian Identity, which enrich and consolidate the growth in belonging and co-responsibility.

All this developed through the usual areas in the ministry: schools, parishes, works of non-formal education, etc.

15. The Piarist Presence Project²⁴ promotes the development of the Christian Community. This model favours the linking of the different works on the basis of common objectives and helps to clarify and order the modalities of Participation. Thus, it offers us a look at a Church and Pious Schools “on the way out” (or “going forth”).

Lines of action

1. To walk towards a Piarist Christian Community, which is at the core of the Presence model, taking care of this ecclesial place as a priority.
 - To make the most of offers of training in Calasanctian Identity.
 - To promote the discovery and experience of one’s own vocation for all the collaborators of our works.
 - To make the most of synergies with: network of parishes, Itaka-Escolapios, Calasanz Movement, other demarcations with works and experiences already carried out...
2. To encourage and help all the demarcations to advance in the field of Participation, on the basis of the key of the vocation culture of religious and lay people, and starting from the existing concrete realities:
 - To develop plans or itineraries.
 - To define and evaluate experiences that occur or can be favored.
 - To walk in each Presence with the horizon of the Statute of Participation of the Demarcation (after having gained adequate knowledge of and having worked on the Directory of Participation of 2015).

24 In addition to the 2015 General Directory of Participation and the different provincial Presence Projects, this concept is referred to in number 12 of the Rules.

3. To enrich the various aspects of the Cooperation modality, designing training processes for educators, teachers, catechists, monitors of the Calasanz Movement, volunteers, former students, etc.
4. To promote everything that favors the maturity and growth of the Piarist Fraternity, which start from joint approaches with the Order, although they are not exclusive to the Fraternity.
 - Periodic meetings between the Congregation and the Council of the Fraternity.
 - Presence Model.
 - Shared moments and teams.
 - Ministries and sending.
 - Joint communities.
 - Legal integration.
 - Co-responsibility in the mission, making most of Itaka-Escolapios.
 - Communication and relationship between religious and laity, taking care of personal dialogue and listening.
5. To involve religious through concrete formation projects (which can be joint with the laity) in initial and ongoing formation, in all areas of Participation, growing in synodality.
6. To advance in the modality of Shared Mission, clarifying, elaborating, and publishing various itineraries that are carried out in the Demarcations and new ones that are convenient.

CORE 3

The Piarist religious we need

7th key of life

Pastoral Care for Vocations

“To promote in a systemic way all the aspects that are part of a consistent Pastoral Care for Vocations”.

“The Vocations Culture seeks a global coherence between all that we do and live as Demarcations, in such a way that the priority of fostering the vocation and the Piarist identity of all those who are part of the Piarist project is clear. We define “vocations culture” as a “coherent and shared set of ways of thinking, feeling, acting and celebrating that create the necessary environment for people to discover their Christian vocation” (46th General Chapter of the Piarist Schools). (46th General Chapter of the Pious Schools, “Called to be a Piarist Religious”, no. 8).

1. We consider it fundamental that the Pious Schools advance in a mentality that values everything related to the work for the strengthening of the Order, which is an instrument at the service of the Kingdom of God. Its consolidation and growth is everyone’s responsibility. To advance in this mentality is a fundamental need for the Pious Schools.
2. The Pious Schools foster this Vocational Culture in their mission areas and in their communities. Within this favourable and necessary environment, it is necessary to clearly call and responsibly orient specific vocations to the Piarist Religious and Priestly Life. The latter is the proper theme of this document and of the process that has been carried out to elaborate it, without considering that other vocations are of lesser importance.

3. We need every **Piarist religious to live focused on his vocation**, living with passion and joy his life of faith, community and mission. It is clear that this balance does not depend only on the individual, but in a very special way, on the atmosphere of the community and the dynamism of the Demarcation.
4. **Every Piarist religious**, by the fact of being one, **is responsible for calling others** to share his vocation. The “vocations culture” of each religious is the best way for us Piarists to show our gratitude to the Order: by working so that it continues to grow in life and mission. We are talking about **how to facilitate a change of mentality in religious**, helping them to assume in a new way the commitment to Vocations Culture, to actively participate in the projects and concrete tasks of the local and provincial Pastoral Care for Vocations teams. We are talking about a radical and profound change.
5. This co-responsibility is assumed starting from the Initial Formation. We build the Order wherever we are. We Piarists grow, from the beginning, with this conviction. And young people will be able to live it if they see it in their formators and in their elders.
6. We live our being religious priest-educators in an integral way. In this vocation we are close to young people, we serve them, we inspire confidence in them, we listen to them, we help them to grow. For this we consider it necessary to form a culture of accompaniment that helps us to live our own mission to the full with a generous dedication, overcoming temptations of individualism, of seeking the limelight, of clericalism or of a lack of dedication to the mission.
7. The Piarist religious community must be meaningful, present among young people, invite them to its home, be welcoming with its joyful witness. Let this be discussed and evaluated at the community meeting. There is a question that can shed light on this and that can be good for a religious community to ask itself: ***what must be changed in our community so that we are able to welcome a young person and share our life with him?***
8. It is important to take care of everything that helps to **make the religious identity of the Piarists visible**. Our identity must be clearly witnessed, so that the specificity of Religious Life and

the Piarist priesthood can be understood. We cite some examples: that the religious are clearly recognizable in our works; to work to show what vows and consecration mean and the consequences they have; to distinguish well the life of the laity from that of the religious, so that progress can be made in a sharing that does not dilute identities; to speak clearly to young people of what Religious Life is and what it entails.

9. In the exercise of our ministry and in our educational relationship with young people, we explicitly invite **the young man to be a Piarist religious**. We make known our specific vocation and invite young people in the Piarist contexts always looking for the good of each person.
10. In our works we share the mission with numerous **educators, catechists, various collaborators**. We collaborate in their formation, so that they too can help in the task of taking care for vocations. In a special way, we share with the Piarist Fraternity the impulse of the Vocations Culture and the determined work for the promotion of Piarist religious vocations.
11. We are convinced of the importance of working in the pastoral care of families, aware of the role of the Domestic Church in the maturing of children's vocation, in the formation of generosity, courage and autonomy. The formation of the Piarist Christian Community has a fundamental role to play in achieving this.
12. The demarcations have grown in awareness of the importance of the Piarist Accompaniment of Vocation. There has been a notable evolution in the systematic itineraries and tools to carry it out.
13. **The missionary dynamism of the Order itself** has a lot to do with vocations. Not only must we present it with affection and clarity, making young people aware of the various missions that the Order carries out in so many countries, but we must also work on *the missionary aspect* as something that must be proposed to young people.
14. Vocations Culture has a lot to do with the **project that the Demarcation** has for itself. We need Demarcations capable of "dreaming of themselves" and, therefore, capable of providing

themselves with spaces and dynamisms in which this is possible. Only a demarcation with dreams, hopes and projects will be able to summon young people to live their vocation in it. We believe that in this the role of the Piarist young adults is very important, to whom this challenge of building renewed demarcations from the perspective of Vocations Culture corresponds in a special way, valuing, of course, the importance of the witness that our older brothers offer to young people.

15. We value the clarity that the exercise of detecting elements that favour or discourage vocations offers us. It is a self-assessment that allows us to situate ourselves realistically in our present and to make an effort to correct what prevents us from moving forward.
16. The **General Congregation will systematically encourage effort on this subject**, creating, for example, reflection groups, organizing some courses, favouring the high-level formation in this subject of some religious and keeping alive the reflection on Vocations Culture in the life of the Order. We want to continue to grow in an organization and planning that facilitates all this at the circumscription and demarcation level.
17. **Our Order does not walk alone.** We live in an ecclesial context, we are actively situated in the life of the Church, we share and collaborate with other religious Congregations.
18. **The concrete way in which we carry out the Pastoral Care for Vocations specific to the Piarist Religious Life is also part of Vocations Culture.** Moreover, there is no true, mature, and responsible Pastoral Care for Vocations without Vocations Culture as its basis. And there is no true Vocations Culture without it leading to an organic and effective Pastoral Care for Vocations. Without Vocations Culture, Pastoral Care for Vocations can degenerate into disconnected activities, and without Pastoral Care for Vocations, Vocations Culture can be only a theory incapable of change and transformation.
19. It is essential that in all the Demarcations we have a basic **structure at the service of pastoral care for vocations.** That means:
 - a. There must be someone in charge of it in the demarcation and others locally in each of the Piarist presences.

- b. We need to have a four-year project (statute) and annual programming, both at local and demarcational level.
 - c. We need to work with demarcational and local teams.
 - d. The link with the Pastoral Care for Vocations of the local religious community needs to be articulated.
 - e. Likewise, there has to be a clear link between Pastoral Care for Vocations and the General Pastoral.
 - f. The Major Superiors should specifically address the issue of Pastoral Care for Vocations in their service to the Demarcation. They should make use of some of their visits to the Piarist presences to accompany this important area of our life and mission.
 - g. The process of preparation of local and demarcational leaders of Pastoral Care for Vocations should be designed, and this process should be part of the dynamics of the demarcation.
 - h. Vocations Culture should be part of the projects of religious communities.
 - i. We need to promote the “culture of evaluation”, so that the plans are always accompanied by the respective evaluations.
20. Wherever it exists, the **Piarist Fraternity** will consider its contribution to Pastoral Care for Vocations. The Demarcational Congregations will work together, with the Councils of the Fraternities, to animate this common challenge. The Piarist Christian Community must be encouraged in its capacity to create an authentic vocations culture.
21. We will strive to **share the resources and materials of Pastoral Care for Vocations** among the people who are involved in it, thus taking advantage of what is being developed in each of the Demarcations.
22. We will try to promote **the Continuous Prayer for Vocations**. We will seek to create and energize spaces and areas of prayer for vocations.
- 23. These 15 theses are a useful tool for evaluating the Pastoral Care for Vocations at the provincial and local levels.**
- a. **1st thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when all the Piarists live in a spirit of vocation.

- b. 2nd thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when each Piarist Community places it at the centre of its life and project.
- c. 3rd thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when its place in the life and project of the Demarcation is clear.
- d. 4th thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when the Demarcation clearly takes care of the presentation and impulse of the Piarist Charism in each of its works.
- e. 5th thesis:** “The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when it is really a transversal topic in all our works.
- f. 6th thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when in each of the works there is a person in charge of carrying it out.
- g. 7th thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when in each work there is a clear and evaluable objective in the topic of vocations.
- h. 8th thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when the process of Piarist Accompaniment of Vocations (or “AVE”, in some places) is clear and is carried out faithfully.
- i. 9th thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when the Demarcation allows and facilitates that it is the Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations itself that renews and enriches it.
- j. 10th thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when the Demarcation has horizons of life and future; otherwise, it cannot exist or becomes “activities”.
- k. 11th thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when it promotes that the host communities are truly communities “pregnant” of a new future.
- l. 12th thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when it is articulated from the offer of three radically essential dynamisms: the experience of God, work with the poor and the community.
- m. 13th thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when it is really related to Initial Formation and Ongoing Formation.

- n. 14th thesis:** Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority if it is addressed in depth in the proposals of the Piarist Synod of Youth.
- o. 15th thesis:** The Piarist Pastoral Care for Vocations is a priority when truly the Demarcation becomes a “body praying for vocations”.

Lines of action

1. To promote that the Pastoral Care for Vocations of all the demarcations has a project, coordinator, team and budget. And ensure that the coordinator has enough time to devote himself effectively to this task.
2. To promote that communities are responsible in Pastoral Care for Vocations and welcoming so that candidates can experience our community life and our ministry.
3. To promote the participation of religious and laity in Pastoral Care for Vocations, with concrete actions and with a clear awareness of the key of Vocation Culture.
4. To pray for vocations in all areas of life and mission. May all demarcations, local communities and Piarist works be prayerful bodies, aware that vocation is a gift from God.
5. To review and ensure the key of vocation culture in pastoral processes, mainly in the Calasanz Movement.
6. To carry out a training plan, on the part of the Order, making use of mainly of virtual means, for the coordinators of the Pastoral Care for Vocations of each demarcation.
7. To accompany the demarcations that have not yet elaborated or updated their Pastoral Care for Vocations project or that need help for the elaboration and realization of their programs.

8th key of life

Initial Formation

“To promote those options and experiences that today are most urgent and necessary for the proper development of our Initial Formation processes”.

We understand the process of vocation as a felicitous call from God, and also as a daring and persistent processual and progressive response of the young person who, centred in Jesus Christ, lives and integrates the mission that the Pious Schools are currently challenged to develop in order to continue building the Pious Schools that we need under an irreplaceable ministry.

The 48th General Chapter endorses the guidelines of the Piarist Formation Directory (FEDE) with an increasingly determined, vigorous impulse aimed at promoting the charism and transforming society and the Church, placing at the centre of all our meetings the conscious development and the determined and organized promotion of the dignity of vulnerable children and youth.

We know that, just as the grain of wheat and the tares grow together, so the Piarist vocation we need can be confused, drowned, or torn away by current dynamics of worldliness, both at the ecclesial and social levels.

The 48th General Chapter wishes to underline the intention to accompany and form a Piarist who gradually and primarily acquires skills or competences such as: accompaniment, discernment and passion for shared mission centred on Jesus Christ in mission dynamics. The Piarist in Initial Formation takes advantage of the formation tools to face evils such as clericalism, abusive attitudes, or other ecclesial pathologies, which prevent the honest and transparent development of the candidate, who would have to maintain

an assiduous and daily treatment with the Spirit to distinguish the light of God and the light of the world.

The Piarist in Initial Formation opens his life to be the germ and sign of hope of the Kingdom of God and of the Calasanctian charism that is already among us. The Piarist in Initial Formation exercises this formation dynamic in the key of ongoing formation – learning to learn – so that, over time, a Piarist open and passionate about Jesus Christ and his mission in the world is formed.

The 48th General Chapter wishes to offer the Pious Schools these Lines of Action for the present sexennium 2021-2027. We hope will be welcomed, not only by those in formation and those in charge of the initial formation. We hope that it will be a conscious, discussed, determined, and organized commitment by all the Pious Schools at all the various levels, from the local, to the demarcation, circumscription, and the Order. In this way, we will ensure a congruent, positive, evangelical, and purposeful reference of those who are the body of the Pious Schools for the young people who are formed in our bosom.

The dynamics that we emphasize in Initial Formation are: work in communion, synodality, in network, in critical analysis, in project, in construction of the Pious Schools, in mission, in dialogue, in empathy, in accompaniment, in discernment, in fraternity and in participation, under a vision of integral ecology.

Lines of action

1. Develop content and experiences that need to be worked on and further developed at this time.
 - Interculturality and inculturation in the houses of formation.
 - Language study.
 - Mentality of Order with the dynamics that exist: Participation, synodality and sustainability.
 - Missionary culture.
 - The care of ecology and ecosystems: as a transversal of formation.
 - Culture of entrepreneurship, leadership, and communication (preparation for the future).

- Affectivity: love at the center of the person.
 - Clericalism and abuse of power.
 - Educate freedom as a condition of fundamental possibility of the formation process. Advance from heteronomy to autonomy, promoting processes of personal growth and capacity for interdependence.
 - Delve into the issues of gender identity and gender role to know how to accompany the religious. Channel desires, aspirations and needs.
 - Form for virtuality by living ministry and spirituality.
 - Docibility: learning to learn, training in the ability to learn
 - Belonging to the Order, also through online meetings of all the juniors of the Order.
 - Well-kept and programmed Calasanctian training, with the help of itinerant teachers (in face-to-face or online mode).
2. To develop the culture of integral accompaniment of candidates that prepares for discernment.
- To give continuity to the accompaniment initiated during the Pastoral Care for Vocations. (Taking care of the entry processes).
 - To accompany the young Piarist out of the center of his vocation of calling, responding and following Jesus, the Lord.
 - To accompany the clarity and transparency of life, coherence with the values of the Gospel, spirit of service, simplicity and work for others.
 - To accompany the passion for mission and the development of capacities for service and evangelizing and educational ministry, especially cultivating the most authentic signs of our charism.
 - To accompany the capacity for the construction of life in community, personal relationships, collaboration in mission and teamwork.
 - To accompany in order to be available for the service of the mission, to be sensitive to the challenges of new realities and calls, to serve the Order in a broad sense, to meet in-

- terculturally, to work together, to take up the challenges of society and the Order.
- To accompany the psychological and human maturity of those in formation.
 - To accompany the academic formation of those in formation.
3. To have committed and trained formators for the service of formation with an adequate ongoing formation and if possible with a stable formation community.
- To train formators in interculturality and inculturation.
 - To guarantee the process of growth in vocation of the formator.
 - To take care of the personal human and spiritual accompaniment of the formator.
 - To train formators in everything related to the prevention of sexual abuse, power and conscience, as well as in overcoming clericalism.
 - With the help of the “Identity and Charism” department of the General Curia, to organize courses and seminars for active formators, especially focused on their Calasanctian formation.
4. To develop everything related to the structure of the Initial Formation processes in the demarcations.
- To consider the profile of the Piarist, as indicated by the FEDE, for our time: to know how to perceive the skills that must be developed during the formation to work them. And in this sense, to embody in formation the future of the Piarist, of community life and mission that we project, on the basis of a reflection carried out by the Order and by each Demarcation.
 - To compare the Ratio Formationis of the Church and the Episcopal Conferences with the demarcational statutes and update them.
 - To deliver reports on how to accompany the formation processes by the formators to the demarcational Superior Major and to the corresponding general instance. Ensure that feedback is made on such reports.

- To use the Rome document of 2019 (“Elements for discernment on overcoming the culture of sexual abuse and power, in the perspective of Initial Formation”) as an instrument for evaluating the formation process, as criteria for formation.
 - To implement the formation means for each of the dimensions involved in the process, such as spiritual director, systematic accompaniment of those in formation, psychological counseling, preparation of files, growth groups.
 - Advance in the objective that all the Demarcations have complete the formation process and combine this goal well with the care of the mentality of Order and the exchange of those in formation.
5. To promote community environments that favour the development of the formation process.
- To take care of the community lifestyle and teamwork.
 - To generate a community climate that favors growth.
 - To ensure that the team of formators functions as a true community of formation.
 - To make our houses of formation authentic “schools of community life”.
6. To guarantee that the Pious Schools continue to be a safe place for the integral development of children and adolescents through the healthy protection of children and adolescents.
- Integration and application of the manuals for the protection of children and adolescents of the Order, of the local churches and of the demarcations.
 - To create formation teams in each Demarcation that can be spaces of accompaniment and of mutual supervision.
 - To reflect with formators on everything related to the respect for vulnerable adults.

9th key of life

Ongoing Formation

“To carry out an Ongoing Formation understood as an integral process of growth in our vocation, based on an adequate accompaniment of individuals and communities”.

The 48th General Chapter of the Order devoted careful reflection to everything related to our Ongoing Formation, and definitively approved a renewed Directory, which offers a wide range of guidelines aimed at the adequate promotion of this dimension of our life.

We present a brief summary of the objectives and structure of the Directory, and the main Lines of Action that were approved by the General Chapter.

A global look at the Directory

1. The directory takes into account a large body of literature on ongoing formation from the Second Vatican Council to the present day, with an emphasis on the Order’s key areas of life: Vocations Culture, Participation in the Pious Schools, Initial Formation, Ministry and Calasanctian Spirituality. In this way it highlights the communion of the Order with the Church and makes reference to the rich ecclesial tradition in the field of formation.
2. In particular, in paragraph 6 of the Directory, where it describes the **key concepts for the realisation of OF**, it highlights the key lines of the formation process of the Directory:
 - a. It proposes to live the formation process in project dynamics. Personal, community and presence projects as very use-

ful mediations to live the process of a transformative and integral growth.

- b. b) It understands formation as being connected to the real life of the Order and of the Demarcation to which the religious belongs, as well as to society and the Church.
- c. c) It guarantees the discernment of God's will with the accompaniment of the superior and the community. A discernment that makes it possible to live formation as a continuous process of personal and institutional revitalisation.

Purpose of the Directory

There are several objectives that the Directory wants to achieve:

1. To achieve an integral process of growth and fidelity to vocation in all the religious throughout their Piarist life.
2. To generate deep transformations in the heart of the religious that make possible authentic change in all areas: personal changes (conversion), changes in the way of living together, changes in the way of living radically the religious consecration and in the generous dedication to the Piarist mission.
3. To foster a culture of the Order capable of responding to today's challenges, creating dynamics and structures that continue to make the Piarist charism possible at the service of today's world.
4. And to reach the central nucleus of the person, where God performs his creative work and where he calls each one by name to educate and evangelize children and young people.

The structure of the Directory

1. The whole document follows the form the Piarist Formation Model. The idea of a proper formation model was promoted by Pope Francis during the world meeting of formators in 2015 held in Rome; in it he invited each congregation and religious institute to think about the formation processes taking into account their own sources: spirituality and charism; in order to guarantee the identity and belonging of all the members to the respective religious families. This idea of the Pope invited the

elaboration of the Piarist Formation Model for both the Initial Formation and the Ongoing Formation.

2. Our OF directory therefore takes into account the structure of what is known in pedagogy as a pedagogical model which, like any model, is based on the **analysis of reality**; reality is read within an **interpretive framework** of the human person and, in our case, also God and the Vocation; **objectives** to be achieved; **pedagogical options** and **evaluation criteria** which show that reality could be addressed and transformed in its challenges.
3. The directory considers the current reality of society, the Church, and the Pious School in which the Piarist religious develops and in which he is continuously formed: themes such as interculturality, inculturation, synodality, Church going out (“going forth”), abuses of power, of conscience and sexual abuse, affective maturity, authentic experience of God, etc., put the formation process in context. We can find them throughout the directory in traits that characterise the person of the religious in the different life cycles and special situations through which he passes in the course of his life.
4. The directory clearly defines the interpretive frameworks for understanding the person of the religious, his relationship with God and others, and the vocation to which he feels called in numbers 1, 2 and 3, which define and clarify the Piarist Identity and Formation, The Piarist formation process, essential keys for an effective ongoing formation, respectively.
5. It clearly defines the objectives (goals) that it wants to achieve in the overall formation process, as well as the objectives for each of the dimensions with which it describes the integral development of the religious. At the same time, it makes clear the pedagogical options of structures, methods, mediations and attitudes that make the formation process possible. All of the above is included in chapter 4 where the common elements of the formation process are made explicit.
6. The fruit of the whole formation process is none other than the Piarist religious who is needed to continue building the Pious Schools today and to give his whole life to the Piarist mission.

In the words of Calasanz, the Piarist we need is a MAN OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, VERY POOR, VERY SIMPLE AND HUMBLE. We find these characteristics developed in the different dimensions involved in the formation process in the sections “traits or areas” and “characteristic traits” in numbers 4 and 5 of the directory.

Lines of action

1. To draw up a plan of integral accompaniment for the different life cycles, which consolidates the accompaniment of the young adult Piarists and the older ones, as well as mutual accompaniment in the communities and demarcations. Also the preparation of the changes of stage or cycle through times and spaces dedicated to recycling and discernment.
2. To promote intercultural capacities and specializations in studies of all kinds, also the mastery of several languages and the ability to understand and relate to new cultures in this globalized world in which we live.
3. To encourage accompaniment to grow in the capacity to summon others and to help them discover the vocation that God gives them.
4. To promote the “Pious Schools Going Forth” as a formation topic, which emphasizes the Piarist missionary spirit, in terms of interculturality and inculturation.

CORE 4

An irreplaceable ministry

10th key of life

The synodal way with young people and the Calasanz Movement

“To understand and promote the Calasanz Movement and the path shared with young people as an authentic key of life of the Pious Schools”.

From its beginnings, the Order of Pious Schools sought to give prominence to the pastoral processes of young people. We see it in the congregations created by Blessed Pedro Casani, among other proposals of the beginnings that were continued in the centuries-old Piarist tradition. Closer to our time, Fr General Ángel Ruiz renewed the centrality of young people with his letter: *The Youth, Preferential Option of the Pious Schools*.

In recent years, the Youth Synod and the Calasanz Movement have been experiences that lead to a greater involvement of young people in the Pious Schools. Since the Holy Spirit is the main actor of this new Piarist Pentecost, we see that young people have a great capacity to listen to him. So, together with them, we open ourselves to the action of this Spirit.

The synodal way with Young People

The process experienced throughout the Piarist Synod of Youth, Faith and Vocation Discernment has been decisive for the promo-

tion of a new relationship between the Pious Schools and young people. The conclusion is clear: let us walk together, in a synodal way.

“The Church as a whole, when choosing through this Synod to concern herself with the young, took a very definite option: she considers this mission a pastoral priority of epoch-making significance, in which to invest time, energy and resources. [...] In this Synod we have experienced how co-responsibility lived with young Christians is a source of profound joy for bishops too”²⁵.

“Few topics point so accurately to the heart of Piarist life and mission, to the deep meaning of the vocation of all of us who feel Piarists. I call you to live a synodal process, to make a journey of reflection, listening, prayer, celebration and decision making that will help us to give answers fuller of the Gospel to the questions that God sows in our hearts and to the searches that are part of our horizon”²⁶.

1. This Piarist synodal process, in communion with the universal Church, unfolded in **four phases**:
 - a. first, local or in the Presences and the Demarcation (from June 2017 to June 2018);
 - b. a second, by continents or circumscriptions (from July 30 to August 2, 2018);
 - c. a third, to welcome the conclusions of the Synodal Assembly (from October 2018 to July 2019) and to make decisions for the Order. This third phase culminated in an Assembly of the Piarist Youth held in Oaxaca (Mexico) in which young people from all the demarcations of the Order were represented and which produced a document with 36 Proposals on eight areas of work²⁷;
 - d. The fourth phase, in which we find ourselves now, is the phase of the implementation of the Proposals of the Youth Assembly held in Oaxaca. We have titled this phase: “We walk together in Synodality”. At the 2022 General Chapter, the results were presented.

25 Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment. Final Document. No 119. Synod of Bishops. Vatican City. 2018.

26 Prot.S.154.2017. Letter by Fr General Pedro Aguado Sch. P.

27 See Annex to the Document.

2. It is good to remember **the three objectives** set out in the Letter of Convocation to the *Piarist Synod* of June 2017 and to set out their challenges:
 - a. **Young people, faith and vocation discernment are at the core of pastoral care.**
 - i. To create stable instruments with continuity over time to work pastoral care with young people. The Calasanz Movement is the privileged path and the means for it.
 - ii. To create platforms for accompaniment and formation of pastoral workers.
 - iii. To improve our structures for welcoming vocations: vocation processes, welcoming communities and qualified companions.
 - b. **The great actor is not the young people; it is the Holy Spirit, and we are going to listen to him with them.**
 - i. To reflect in each presence what are the channels and structures so that young people can be present and heard.
 - ii. To work in synodal attitude the spirituality of young people.
 - iii. To create flexible means adapted to the very different realities of each place in order to continue promoting this attitude of listening together.
 - c. **We enhance the active role of young people and share the search for better ways of evangelization.**
 - i. To promote those platforms that favour the accompaniment of young people in their growth in faith and in their Piarist identity.
 - ii. To challenge young people to assume life and mission in relation to us: as religious or as lay people who are committed to unite their vocation to that of the Pious Schools.
 - iii. To develop their talents by allocating people, economic resources, and time.

A privileged pastoral process: the Calasanz Movement

“To continue to develop our pastoral care in integral and complete processes, especially promoting the Calasanz Movement”. (47th General Chapter of the Pious Schools).

Ten years after its creation (May 31, 2012), the Calasanz Movement is accepted and welcomed into the Order as a whole as a fundamental line of our ministry.

The General Team that coordinates it has valued very positively the growth of the Calasanz Movement in the whole of the Order. Most of the Provinces have already initiated Processes of the Calasanz Movement or are working to do so soon. We understand that this good reception expresses the strategic value that each province gives to the pastoral work with a community horizon, especially in terms of calling and vocation, generating the Piarist subject and the Piarist Christian community.

Throughout the previous six-year term, work was carried out on a strategic plan structured in five main areas: development of the Calasanz Movement model; relationships and networks; training of the Educator of the Calasanz Movement; systematization of resources and communication and dissemination. The 48th General Chapter of the Order encourages the General Congregation to continue with the path undertaken, with a new strategic plan for the next six years.

Lines of action

1. To strengthen the Calasanz Movement in all the demarcations, with a proposal that has its foundation in the spirituality of our Holy Founder and his fidelity to the Church.
 - To guarantee that all the *fundamental elements* expressed in the principles of the Calasanz Movement are fulfilled, adapting them to each cultural reality and to the style of the demarcations.
 - To create *stable structures at the local and demarcational level* and consolidate the *general team that drives it* by ensuring that there is one person from each Circumscription in it.
 - To develop the proposals of young people concerning the Calasanz Movement in the *Assembly of the Piarist Youth*.
 - To take care of the accompaniment and vocation discernment in the progression of the itinerary of the Calasanz Movement in each of the presences.

2. To care for and concretise this new style of relationship and construction of the Church through synodality with young people by means of effective listening and co-responsibility with them in the pastoral process, caring for life, faith and their protagonism.
 - To apply this same co-responsibility with the trainees, offering formation and progressive experiences for training and leadership.
 - To continue to work on equal opportunities between men and women, and train in the comprehensive protection of minors against situations of abuse.
 - To promote the presence model where young people are active participants in the Piarist Christian Community.
 - To promote formation in Christian leadership and youth ministry, especially in the university environment and in the evangelization of culture.
3. To continue to open dynamic spaces and activities in the Order of, with and for young people for their human, Christian, vocation and Calasanctian growth through a solid accompaniment.
 - To develop new ways of proclaiming the Gospel based on one's own talents and abilities.
 - To strengthen the encounter of young people with Jesus present in the most needy and other significant experiences.
 - To advance in a proposal of integral formation in relation to life, love, affectivity, and sexuality.
 - To continue working on building a new integral ecological awareness and strengthen volunteering.
 - To encourage the Piarist religious to be with the young people, sharing with them and accompanying them in the communities.
4. To consolidate the relations and networks of the Calasanz Movement and improve the communication and dissemination of experiences and resources in the official languages of the Order.
 - To connect the *Piarist Fraternity with the Calasanz Movement* as two realities that complement and enrich each other.
 - To consolidate the *operation by circumscriptions* by programming joint actions.

- To share our experience and enrich ourselves with that of *other realities of youth, social and ecclesial pastoral care* beyond the Pious Schools.
 - To connect the Calasanz Movement with the “*Youth Ministry Network (RPJ)*”.
5. To develop resources for the Calasanz Movement and to grow in the training of educators.
- To strengthen strategically and with an experiential pedagogy: personal and community prayer, celebrations of faith, the social dimension, and the vocation dimension.
 - To implement the Training Plan for Educators of the Calasanz Movement in each presence structuring the follow-up of the same.
 - To involve and prepare young religious in the Calasanz Movement as authentic pastors.
 - To ensure qualified work teams in mutual cooperation and co-responsibility.

11th key of life

Identity of the Piarist ministry in the various platforms

“To significantly develop the Calasanzian Identity of all our Mission platforms, following the principle of Educate, Proclaim, Transform”.

The popular school

1. Saint Joseph Calasanz conceived the Pious Schools as a **school institution** where pupils received an integral formation in piety and letters with a specific curriculum, which included activities such as catechesis, oratory, continuous prayer, confraternities and brotherhoods, walks in the countryside and the custom of accompanying the children home. He designed a **model of a full-time school** that aimed to form active citizens, committed Christians and competent professionals.
2. The **popular school** has been the fundamental means of the Piarist apostolate which has never been renounced, unless compelled by force majeure, as has happened at times in our history. From the beginnings of the Order, the Piarist mission was also exercised in **boarding schools** such as the “Colegio Nazareno” in Rome and in **churches** open to the community. With the passage of time, the mission was also opened to **parishes** and **centres of evangelisation** with a preferential option for the education of children, especially the poor.
3. In fidelity to tradition, the Piarist mission is carried out preferentially in the popular school in countries where social and legal

conditions make it possible. In places where it has been impossible to open schools, the Piarist ministry has been kept alive in areas linked to **evangelisation, catechesis** and **non-formal education** among children and young people.

Plurality of mission platforms

1. Although from our origins there have been different ways of carrying out our ministry, in more recent times and, above all, after the Second Vatican Council, the Pious Schools also recognize as their own other mission platforms other than the school such as parishes, missions, extracurricular activities and the **“parallel school”**; that is, all the current dynamisms that contribute in a non-formal way to the education of youth. With this new perspective of renewal, a boost was given to the Piarist mission by opening new non-scholastic works among the poorest: homes, parishes, rehabilitation centres, missions, homework schools...
2. In the document “Evangelising by educating in a Calasancian style”, **non-scholastic** mission platforms are defined as: *“non-academic activity or institution that, whether or not depending on a school, is assumed by a Piarist community (local, demarcational or general) and always seeks, with educational and Calasancian overtones, the proclamation of the Kingdom, improving the present world, making it more free, humane and just. These non-scholastic works arise as a response to the new challenges, urgencies and fundamentally non-formal educational needs that emerge in these times and make present the Calasancian charism, keeping it up to date, with creative fidelity”*²⁸.
3. The Pious Schools recognise as Piarist works boarding schools, residences and homes, non-formal education programmes, parishes and churches with public worship, adult education, voluntary work and foundations. Any activity that promotes youth, parent and alumni associations is also very Piarist. Ex-

28 General Congregation: “El Ministerio escolapio: evangelizar educando con estilo calasancio”, in *Misión Compartida en las Escuelas Pías*. Publicaciones ICCE. Colección “CUADERNOS” n.23, Paragraph 42. Madrid 1999.

tracurricular and leisure activities are a perfect complement to school education.

4. These various works are not only legitimately considered Piarist, but they are well placed within what we call “non-formal education”, since they “*make present the Calasanctian charism keeping it up to date, with creative fidelity*”²⁹. The non-formal modality is as important as formal education in the development of the individuals, since it often complements what the school is slow or never manages to incorporate into its programmes and which is essential in a Piarist educational project.
5. In summary, the Pious Schools recognize the following **mission platforms**:
 - a. **The school**: the first and genuine Piarist work that educates in an integral and integrating way, offering students qualifications that help them to access work or higher education. Nowadays, the popular and integral school promotes values in line with its identity and seeks collaboration with other educational entities (family, parish, surrounding entities, leisure time, etc.).
 - b. **Higher education**. Historically, our institutional presence in higher education has not been so strong, but it is an important field for the Order. These institutions are becoming more numerous in the Pious Schools, and we believe that we must make a commitment to continue to grow in this field.
 - c. **The parish or church with public worship**: They are highly appropriate spaces for the development of the Christian community where the emphasis is placed on liturgy, evangelisation processes, pastoral care and social action. In addition, Calasanctian spirituality should be promoted in all areas of pastoral care and the development of educational programmes. The “Network of Piarist Parishes” is a good instrument to promote the Calasanctian identity.
 - d. **The non-formal education centre**: It is a community space for the development of different non-formal educa-

29 Ibid.

tion programmes. It emphasises the relational aspects of education and is organised according to the educational needs and opportunities of the context. It can be an autonomous centre with its own organisation, or be linked to a school or a parish. In general, it is more flexible than the school, adapting to the specific needs of each place. In the Pious Schools, there are cultural centres, hostels, social centres, farm schools and group centres (or “casas de convivencia”). All of these contribute to the integral development of young people alongside the work of the school.

- e. **Homes, residences and boarding schools:** Educational spaces where residents are accompanied in their developmental process, living - most of them - on a full-time boarding basis. The beneficiaries are children and young people at risk of social exclusion or who have difficulty accessing education.
6. All these platforms have in common the commitment to educate in an integral way in Piety and Letters. Each of them contributes to the Piarist project in its own style and organization. It is important that the Presence Team works with a shared vision to gain in Piarist identity and give continuity to the projects.
 7. The religious community, the Fraternity and all those who live the Piarist charism - the Piarist Christian community - are the guarantors of giving life to all the proposals of mission that exist in the presence. In some presences of the Order, the ITAKA-Escolapios network is a good tool that promotes the Piarist mission in the various platforms and promotes the Shared Mission between Order and Fraternity.

Identity elements in all our mission platforms

1. In each of the platforms, any **educational program** that contributes to the integral development of the student can be implemented according to the profile of competences that is defined in the educational project. We point out some programs of special relevance in the current dynamics of the Pious Schools:

- a. Calasanz Movement (child and youth pastoral processes).
 - b. Training of educators.
 - c. Associations of students, alumni, and families.
 - d. Free time activities.
 - e. School tutoring.
 - f. Sports activities.
 - g. Continuous Prayer.
 - h. Volunteering.
 - i. Family education.
 - j. Catechesis.
 - k. Cultural and artistic activities.
 - l. Other...
2. Each of the Piarist mission platforms must incorporate into its educational project the “Ten elements of Calasanzian quality” approved in the 46th General Chapter (2009) that have their adaptation and development in more specific documents intended for schools, parishes, homes and task rooms. These ten elements are:
- Centrality of children and young people.
 - Option for the poor.
 - Shared mission.
 - Sense of belonging to the Church.
 - Involvement of the family.
 - Proclamation of the Gospel.
 - Educational and pastoral quality.
 - Accompaniment.
 - Training of educators.
 - Reform of society.

In addition, we point out other indicators that seem relevant to us:

- With integral **educational** processes from childhood to adulthood.
- Build **Piarist Christian community** and promote **ministries**.

- With a well-defined **educational and pastoral project**.
 - Institutionally **assumed** by the Pious Schools.
 - Linking **to external networks**.
 - **Open and in relation to** the nearby community.
 - Integration between **faith and culture**.
 - Fostering of the **vocation** aspect.
3. Provincial Congregations, through their work teams, must consider the importance of the various mission platforms, guaranteeing their Piarist identity, seeking the educational and pastoral quality of the projects and putting them in connection with each other and with the teams of the Order.
 4. The General Congregation will accompany the proper functioning and Piarist identity of all mission platforms.

The commitment to innovation with piarist identity. Criteria and characteristics

1. Innovation is part of our essence.
 - a. The Order of the Pious Schools was born 400 years ago as a consequence of the brilliant intuition of Joseph Calasanz inspired by the Spirit of God. His response to the reality of poor children was the foundation of a religious institute specialised in education. It was an innovation, both in its objectives and in the means used. To direct the priestly vocation to the “vile and despicable office” of the education of poor children was such a daring proposal that only with humility and perseverance could he realise it.
 - b. From the very beginning, Calasanz realised that in order to fulfil the educational mission effectively, it was necessary to apply the best existing methods. To this end, he ensured that the Piarists learned them from the wisest and most experienced of the time. Since then, many Piarists came up with innovative, useful and simple methods for the students to acquire the necessary skills to continue with higher studies or to be employed in some worthy work.

- c. On the other hand, the Order's own dedication to the education of children and young people has meant that, over the last 400 years, it has had the responsibility of being permanently inserted in the world and culture of young people and, therefore, of responding to their educational challenges and needs by means of a continuous updating of approaches, methods, equipment, qualifications, etc.
 - d. In the world of education, those who do not innovate remain outdated. On the other hand, the transmission of culturally relevant knowledge at all times requires the design of permanent innovation processes that enable not only to access an inherited cultural heritage but also to create knowledge.
 2. An innovation that puts the boy, the girl, the young person at the centre.
 - a. It starts from the reality of the students.
 - b. It is linked to the social and human environment to generate authentic learning communities.
 - c. It embraces the diversity of children from all points of view and turns it into a learning opportunity.
 - d. It aims to develop the necessary skills for life.
 - e. It promotes knowledge of thinking and learning processes in order to learn to think and learn.
 - f. It proposes an evaluation model integrated into the training process itself as an element of reflection and growth.
 - g. It generates subjectivity and identity.
 3. An innovation with Piarist intentionality realizes.
 - a. The "competence profile of the student" and the educational purposes of the centre.
 - b. It integrates spirituality and culture, Piety and Letters (integral education) overcoming merely technical and functional approaches.
 - c. It transforms culture and society through the generation of ideas, places, signs, experiences and alternative narratives.
 4. An accessible and inclusive innovation.
 - a. With useful and simple methods.

- b. Accessible to all families.
 - c. Generator of social, cultural, economic, political, religious inclusion.
 - d. That adequately serves people with different abilities.
5. A sustainable, systematic, institutionalized, non-at-random innovation.
- a. It starts from the reflection on the practice itself.
 - b. It considers the discoveries of the sciences.
 - c. Integrated into management processes in continuous improvement cycles.
6. A collegial innovation, not individualistic.
- a. It starts from diagnoses, reflections, and shared proposals.
 - b. It encourages the sharing of good practices and peer review and support.
 - c. Facilitates training and updating.
 - d. Generates pedagogical style and educational community.
 - e. It calls for shared mission.

Lines of action

1. To advance in the processes of Calasanctian identity of all our mission platforms.
 - To promote *pedagogical reflection* in a Calasanctian vein among all our educators.
 - To facilitate the *Calasanctian formation* of educators and foster mission experiences with them.
 - To continue to promote *educational and curricular innovation* in the Piarist line.
 - To propose flexible *learning and training* platforms, and pedagogies that encourage and accompany educators and students.
 - To study what the *current significance of the Calasanctian school* is in the various contexts of the mission in connection with our tradition and current challenges.

- To integrate all mission platforms into the dynamics of the presence model.
 - To work from a consensual model of the *profile of the Piarist student* that especially affects the profile of the educator.
2. To enhance the evangelizing dimension of our educational project.
 - To strengthen the *Piarist Christian Community* in our presences as the subject of the mission and nucleus that guarantees the Piarist identity.
 - To deepen the curricular contents from the perspective of Christian humanism and offer concrete proposals (*Piety and Letters*).
 - To continue to promote *continuous prayer*.
 - To promote the creation of an *on-line Pastoral platform* of the Youth Ministry Network (RPJ).
 3. To embed ourselves in the dynamics of the Global Compact for Education.
 - To promote content and experiences that develop the axes proposed by Pope Francis in the context of the *Global Compact for Education* for the reform of society.
 - To promote a greater relationship and collaboration with *families and alumni* in all our educational platforms.
 - To advance in the implementation of the model of a “*full-time school*” where there is a clear relationship between formal, non-formal and informal education.
 - *To work in a network* with other educational and social institutions in the environment in shared projects.
 - To develop *intercultural education*.
 - To actively participate in *institutions and forums* dedicated to education, children and youth.
 4. To put children at the center of the entire educational process.
 - To continue to drive our *dedication to the poor* on all platforms of our ministry.
 - To ensure that all necessary protocols - e.g. health and safety, protection of minors, etc. - are in place in our educational works.

- To promote access to technologies to the neediest students.
5. To articulate the relationship and work between the teams of the Order and the Demarcations.
- To promote *collaboration and synergy* between the different secretariats and work teams of the Pious Schools.
 - To ensure that *good practices* in the different educational programs are shared among the Provinces.
 - To set up *work teams* to promote the training of Piarist educators.
 - To continue to maintain the *Virtual Platforms* of the Order as a way to share reflections, materials and experiences.
 - To organise an International Education *Congress*, with a prior process in the demarcations and an appropriate design for the reception of the work and results of the Congress.

SUMMARY PRESENTATION OF THE KEYS OF LIFE OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS FOR THE SEXENNIUM 2021-2027

CONFIGURING CORE

*To walk with Christ, from the centre
of our vocation*

1. PIARIST SPIRITUALITY. “To delve deeper into the experience of our own spirituality, taking care of the most significant actions”.
2. COMMUNITY LIFE. “To renew our Community Life and take special care of the central aspects underlined by our Constitutions”.
3. INTERCULTURALITY AND INCULTURATION. “To make decisive progress in the dynamics of a Pious Schools Going Forth that are intercultural and missionary”.
4. SYNODALITY. “To live synodality as a path of renewal of our Culture of Order”.
5. INTEGRAL SUSTAINABILITY. “To advance significantly in the objective of achieving the integral sustainability of the Pious Schools”.
6. PARTICIPATION. “To continue to advance in all the modalities that are part of the process of Participation in the Pious Schools”.
7. PASTORAL CARE FOR VOCATIONS. “To promote in a systemic way all the aspects that are part of a consistent Pastoral Care for Vocations”.

8. INITIAL FORMATION. “To promote those options and experiences that today are most urgent and necessary for the proper development of our Initial Formation processes”.
9. ONGOING FORMATION. “To carry out an Ongoing Formation understood as an integral process of growth in our vocation, based on an adequate accompaniment of individuals and communities”.
10. THE SYNODAL WAY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE CALASANZ MOVEMENT. “To understand and promote the Calasanz Movement and the path shared with young people as an authentic key of life of the Pious Schools”.
11. IDENTITY OF THE PIARIST MINISTRY IN THE VARIOUS PLATFORMS. “To significantly develop the Calasanctian Identity of all our Mission platforms, following the principle of Educate, Proclaim, Transform”.