



Vitality springs forth
from pruning.

Future Direction

GENERAL CHAPTER 2016



*"My principal prayer has been
to know the will of God
and my only resolution to do it."*

(Elizabeth Hayes)

We, the members of the twenty first General Chapter of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception gathered at Larne, Northern Ireland, bringing with us the wisdom of the Sisters of our Governance Circles, who had reflected on the theme *I am the Vine... Prune for fruitfulness*. As we further discerned the current state of our Institute, its strength and its frailties, its diminishment and emergent new growth, we recognised this Chapter as a defining moment for our Institute.

We identified the pruning required as action to simplify and consolidate so as to promote fruitfulness in our Franciscan life and mission.

In order to do this we are called to:

Governance

1. Simplify and restructure to move gradually to one level of governance, beginning the process with the Canadian and Latin American Governance Circles.
2. Move the General Administration as the restructuring proceeds and after sufficient research.
3. Consolidate all archives in Generalate and Governance Circles, using professional expertise.
4. Establish an MFIC International Finance Commission to help increase common awareness, to move towards an Institute wide financial management system, and to develop expertise in the area of finance.

Mission

1. Encourage collaboration for mission and support mission projects in areas of great need, using our finances, sponsoring laity, and promoting partnerships with other congregations and organisations (eg Solidarity with South Sudan).
2. Explore the possibility of an international / intercultural mission involving Sisters from Latin America and Papua New Guinea as well as from other areas of the Institute.

3. Consolidate for mission, considering letting go of established missions where this channels resources for new mission opportunities.
4. Limit the number of Sisters in full time internal ministries to free Sisters for mission.
5. Recognise and value the significant contribution to our mission made by the contemplative dimension of the life of all, especially the sick and the older Sisters.

Formation

1. Establish an International Formation Commission to develop and support an initial formation program and on-going formation.
2. Proceed from a viable mission presence when promoting, attracting, accepting and nurturing vocations.
3. Provide mentoring in ministry for newer members through immersion in ministries of our MFIC communities, and of other congregations with particular expertise.

Set in a landscape of great natural beauty, our deliberations were enriched by our Franciscan communion with creation. We move forward with the challenge to deepen our understanding of Cosmic spirituality and its implications for our life, our prayer and our mission.