



Rome, 20 February 2019  
Anniversary of the birth of Ven. Thecla Merlo

To the Circumscription Superiors,  
Superiors of the communities  
dependent on the General Government  
and all the Sisters

**Object: Convocation of the Congregation's 11<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Chapter**

Dear Sisters,

On the day on which we celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Maestra Thecla, I want to give you some information about a very important appointment in which we all feel deeply involved: *the convocation of our 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter*.

We have already traveled a sizeable piece of this road together. Since my first circular letters (2 January and 28 February 2018), in which I announced the theme of the Chapter and set down several concrete guidelines concerning the way to prepare for it, several important stages of our journey have been realized:

- the involvement of all our communities in this event by means of the document *In Preparation for the 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter* (Study Aid 11<sup>th</sup> GC/01), which favored an initial deepening of the theme and proposed some questions to help all of us reflect on our situation and offer useful elements for drawing up the draft of the *Work Instrument* (March 2018);
- the official convocation of our Provincial Chapters, Delegation Meetings and Meetings of the communities dependent on the General Government, in preparation for our 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter (June 2018);
- the sending out of the study aid *In Preparation for the 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter*, which contains 9 prayer outlines on subjects linked to the content of the General Chapter and to liturgical, congregational and Pauline Family events (September 2018);
- the holding of our Provincial Chapters, Delegation Meetings and Meetings of the dependent communities, during which the Chapter's theme was studied more profoundly, the Congregation's journey over the 2013-2019 sennium was examined; the *Work Instrument* was evaluated and suggestions for enriching and improving it were proposed; amendments to articles of the Constitutions and Directory were suggested, and the delegates to the General Chapter were elected (October 2018–February 2019).

Some sisters on the Pre-Chapter Commission, accompanied by the facilitator, Claretian Father Cristo Rey Paredes, are already working on the General Chapter's *Work Instrument* as a result of the entire Congregation's involvement in it. This *Instrument* will be sent in due time to the sisters who will be participating in the Chapter so that they can study it, and some copies will be sent to our communities by way of information.

We now open the stage of proximate preparation for the General Chapter by means of this

**OFFICIAL CONVOCATION  
OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> ORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER  
OF OUR CONGREGATION**

The General Chapter is the supreme authority of the Congregation, exercised in a collegial and temporary way, in accord with the Constitutions, which list its purposes as follows (cf. Const. 165):

- to study more profoundly the charism of the Institute and to actualize it in the light of the teachings of the Church, the socio-cultural situations of the world, and the evolution of communications;

- to examine the journey of the Congregation, reflect on its situation, deal with general problems and pinpoint *processes of transformation*, that is, the gradual steps that the Spirit is suggesting to carry out *the mission of God*, with which we collaborate by means of his grace;
- to issue deliberations and norms;
- to elect the Superior General and her councilors.

- Date** The General Chapter will begin on 5 September and will end on 5 October 2019.
- Place** The Divine Master Retreat House – Casa “Divin Maestro” – Strada Regionale 218, Km. 11 - 00072 Ariccia (RM) tel. 06.934.86.1; e-mail: [casadivinmaestro@paulus.net](mailto:casadivinmaestro@paulus.net)
- Participants** ***60 sisters will participate in the Chapter:***  
 20 by right (the ex-superior general is also a provincial superior), and 40 by election.  
*With regard to the sisters participating by election:*  
 22 were elected by our provinces  
 16 by our delegations  
 2 by the communities directly dependent on the General Government (see *Attachment*).
- Language** The official language of the Chapter, in which every document will be drafted, will be Italian. Simultaneous translation services will be provided for the sisters who need it.

### ***Climate of Prayer***

The Constitutions invite us to nourish a climate of profound prayer, which the entire Congregation is asked to cultivate in this time of proximate preparation for the Chapter (cf. Dir. 166.2).

I would like to underscore here several moments and expressions of this prayer to live together:

- To continue to deepen the Chapter’s theme: “*Arise, go on your journey, trusting in the Promise,*” including through assimilation of the Word of God. The prayer outlines we are using can help us rediscover the power of prophetic proclamation and can also help us dream of the new things God has in mind for our Congregation.
- To live with particular intensity, in this year in which we are celebrating the *Centenary of the Pact*, that particular *prayer of faith*, so as to place all our trust in the Lord, allow him to be the protagonist of our journey, and entrust ourselves to his providence and love.
- To invoke the Holy Spirit, “God’s finger in action,” through the *Prayer for the 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter*, asking him to give us the wisdom of the prophets, the courage of Paul, and the faith of Mary, Alberione and Thecla.
- To ask the people close to us, the Pauline Family, other religious Congregations and cloistered monasteries to *pray* that we will open ourselves to complete trust in God, who is faithful.

In the coming months, we will enrich the *Reserved Area* of our website ([www.paoline.org](http://www.paoline.org)) with more content and documents useful for deepening the Chapter’s theme. We will also prepare the website of the 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter.

A time of more profound reflection and listening is beginning for all of us: a time in which to grasp the will of the Lord and identify the paths that can “make dreams sprout, arouse prophecies and visions, make hope flourish, stimulate trust, bind wounds, weave relationships and resuscitate a dawn of hope” (Pope Francis).

May the Spirit reawaken our hearts, make us capable of docile listening and discernment, broaden our horizons and give us a vision of the future brimming over with the joy of the Gospel.

With profound affection and remembrance of you in prayer,



Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan  
 Superior General

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*Attachment:* List of the participants in the 11<sup>th</sup> General Chapter