



Hospitality in a changing world



General Chapter - Poland
Oct - Nov 2024

**DOCUMENTS OF THE LXX GENERAL CHAPTER AND
PROGRAMME FOR THE SEXENNium 2024**

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PRESENTATION

from 15 October to 7 November 2024, 66 Brothers and 19 Co-workers gathered in Czestochowa (Poland) to celebrate the 70th General Chapter of the Order. All the capitulars spent these weeks working eagerly and enthusiastically on the very full agenda, under the theme 'HOSPITALITY IN A CHANGING WORLD'.

We reached the Chapter after a demanding and innovative period of preparation that began with the Regional Conferences, which was then broadened to the individual Provinces and extended to groups of Brothers, Co-workers, volunteers and those in our care, who, guided using the 'sensing' methodology, debated and addressed the issues specific to our Order.

From the very outset, the sensing method invited us to 'expand the tent of our awareness of the world', to broaden our perception of our surroundings and to gain a thorough understanding of our internal environment. It was a journey undertaken jointly by Brothers and Co-workers that enabled us to discern the new directions that Hospitality is going to take in the future, to open ourselves up in readiness for the new challenges that the world is throwing down to us, and above all to be mindful of, and ready to heed, God's call in our lives as 'Hospitallers', keeping faith with the life and ethos of our Founder, St. John of God.

Below is a list of the documents which bear witness to the hard work, dedication and participation of the whole Order at the 70th General Chapter. They will guide us as we prepare, organise and implement the commitments that the new General Government has set itself with the programme for the sexennium 2024-2030, which is also included in this wealth of documents.

In this connection, I wish to inform you that for the practical implementation of the guidelines laid down by the General Chapter, we have created two new 'areas of animation' (emerging realities and care for the planet) and we have decided to involve our lay co-workers more closely in the governance and animation of the Order.

Once again, I would like to thank the Polish Province for their warm welcome and for having dedicated themselves so diligently to the running of the General Chapter, and the various commissions that had worked hard, both before and during the Chapter itself, and finally, address a special thanks to Brother Jesús Etayo who has led us as Superior General for twelve years.

I wish all of us, as members of our great Hospitaller Family, to embark on this new journey boldly, and with renewed momentum, so that, 'generous in charity', our commitment to the most needy people may be a tangible reality. May the example and dedication of our Founder, St John of God, help us to implement our projects.

Brother Pascal Ahodegnon, O.H.
Superior General

15 October - 7 November 2024

PARTICIPANTS

GENERAL CURIA	
1	Bro. Jesús ETAYO, priest
2	Bro. Joachim ERRA MAS
3	Bro. Pascal AHODEGNON
4	Bro. José Augusto G. LOURO
5	Bro. Joseph SMITH
6	Bro. Dairon Orley MENESES CARO, priest
7	Bro. Vincent KOCHAMKUNNEL
ROMAN PROVINCE	
8	Bro. Luigi GAGLIARDOTTO, priest
9	Bro. Lorenzo A. GAMOS
10	Bro. Gerardo D'AURIA
LOMBARDY-VENICE PROVINCE	
11	Bro. Massimo VILLA, priest
12	Bro. Dario VERMI, priest
13	Bro. Gian Carlo LAPIC', priest
FRENCH PROVINCE	
14	Bro. Paul-Marie TAUFANA
15	Bro. Mathieu SISAHAYE
16	Bro. Emilien RASTIMANDRESY
AUSTRIAN PROVINCE	
17	Bro. Saji MULLANKUZH, priest
18	Bro. Jakobus JANCI
19	Bro. Daniel KATZENSCHLÄGER
BAVARIAN PROVINCE	
20	Bro. Rudolf KNOPP
21	Bro. Thomas VÄTH, priest
22	Bro. Benedikt HAU
POLISH PROVINCE	
23	Bro. Franciszek Salezy CHMIEL
24	Bro. Tymoteusz HOŁOZUBIEC
25	Bro. Albert Chmielowski DOROCIAK, priest
26	Bro. Paweł KULKA
PORTUGUESE PROVINCE	
27	Bro. José Paulo SIMÕES PEREIRA
28	Bro. Vitor Manuel LAMEIRAS MONTEIRO
29	Bro. Augusto VIEIRA GONÇALVES

OCEANIA PROVINCE		
30	Bro. Timothy GRAHAM	ABSENT
31	Bro. Vianney WELCH	
32	Bro. Peter VAN PEPERSTRATEN	
UNITED STATES PROVINCE		
33	Bro. Stephen DE LA ROSA	
34	Bro. Thaddeus BUI CONG HIEN-LINH, priest	
35	Bro. Ignatius SUDOL	
PROVINCE OF VIETNAM		
36	Bro. Joseph VUONG HOAI DUC	
37	Bro. Simon LE HAN	
38	Bro. Peter PHAM VAN PHU	
39	Bro. James PHAN DUY TAN	
PROVINCE OF INDIAN		
40	Bro. George KIZHAKKENATH	
41	Bro. Joseph Yanka SHARMA	
42	Bro. Baiju Chacko VALUPARAMPIL	
PROVINCE OF KOREAN		
43	Bro. John JUNG, priest	
44	Bro. Hasang Paul JUNG YOUNGHO	
45	Bro. Luke BAEK SUNGHO	
PROVINCE OF AFRICA ST. AUGUSTINE		
46	Bro. Paulinus TOH KISAM	
47	Bro. Peter L DAWOH	
48	Bro. Bartholomew KAMARA	
49	Bro. Jacob Ketchen TAMBE, priest	
WEST EUROPEAN PROVINCE		
50	Bro. Donatus FORKAN	
51	Bro. Robert MOORE, priest	
52	Bro. Louis KUYOKWA	
PROVINCE OF AFRICA ST. RICHARD PAMPURI		
53	Bro. Hugues ASSOU, priest	
54	Bro. Parfait TCHAOU	
55	Bro. Nicolas N'SALE	
GOOD SHEPHERD IN NORTH AMERICA PROVINCE		
56	Bro. David LYNCH	
57	Bro. Nicholas FORAN	
58	Bro. Thomas OSORIO	
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN		
59	Bro. Erik CASTILLO CARREÑO	
60	Bro. Rubén Daniel GONZÁLEZ, priest	
61	Bro. Félix ACUÑA ZAMORA, priest	
62	Bro. Iván Antonio MONTOYA FRANCO, priest	
SPAIN		
63	Bro. Amador FERNÁNDEZ, priest	
64	Bro. José María BERMEJO DE FRUTOS, priest	
65	Bro. José Antonio SORIA CRAUS	
66	Bro. José Luis FONSECA BRAVO	
67	Bro. Benigno RAMOS RODRÍGUEZ, priest	

CO-WORKERS		
1	Mr. Klaus MUTSCHLECHNER	General Curia
2	Mr. Antonio CAPUANO	Roman Province
3	Ms. Mariagrazia ARDISSONE	Lombardy-Venice Province
4	Mr. Pascal DUPERRAY	French Province
5	Mr. Peter AUSWEGER	Austrian Province
6	Mr. Marco SCHLEICHER	Bavarian Province
7	Ms. Ewa SOLECKA-FLOREK	Polish Province
8	Mr. Nuno LOPES	Portuguese Province
9	Ms. Mary MOUHAYET	Oceania Province
10	Sr. Katherine GRAY C.S.J.	United States Province
11	Mr. Van Thuan TRAN	Vietnam Province
12	Mr. Dipu JOHN	Indian Province
13	Ms. Catherine MA	Korean Province
14	Mr. Valentine K. BRUKU	African Province of St. Augustine
15	Mr. Conor McCarthy	Occidental Europe Province
16	M. Gérard Kolka DALAKENA	African Province of St. Riccardo Pampuri
17	Mr. Sam CINO	God Shepherd Province
18	Ms. Marianella HUAMÁN	Latin America and the Caribbean Province
19	Mr. Josep PIFARRÉ PAREDERO	Spain Province
FACILITATOR		
1	Mr. Matthieu DAUM	France
SECRETARIAT		
2	Bro. André SENE	Secretary General
3	Ms. Yvonne NOLAN	Assistant Secretary GC, Occidental Europe Province
4	Ms. Daria ZYSKOWSKA Poland	Polish Province
5	Mr. Grzegorz WABERSKI	Polish Province
6	Fra Hubert MATUSIEWICZ	Polish Province
COMMUNICATION AND WEB SITE		
7	Mr. Pierre Antoine CHEVALIER Mr. Antoine SOUBRIER	French Province
SPIRITUAL PREPARATION/DISCERNMENT PHASE		
	Fr. Cristo Rey PAREDES	Spain
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**70th GENERAL CHAPTER
HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD
OPENING ADDRESS**

Brother Jesús Etayo
Superior General

Częstochowa (Poland), 15 October 2024

1. Introduction

Dear Brothers and Co-workers, welcome to this special place in the Shrine of Częstochowa, to this House which will be hosting us for the next few weeks during which we shall be celebrating the 70th General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, which is now beginning.

I hope that you will all feel comfortable and at your ease in this beautiful place and in this hotel, which will be our home for a few days. The Polish Province and the General Curia have been working with great dedication through the commissions specifically instituted to give us the favourable environment we need to carry out our mission over the coming days in the best possible conditions. We ask you for your understanding and your help to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

Our Constitutions say that, "The General Chapter is the deepest form of communion in the charism of the Order and is the place where collegiality is manifested in a special way. It has supreme authority within the Order and is, therefore, the body with prime responsibility for the guidance of our Institute in carrying out the mission entrusted to it by the Holy Spirit in the Church " (82a).

I am not going to comment on everything this article addresses, but the importance and profound significance of the General Chapter is evident. I urge you all to participate gratefully and readily to fully experience communion and fraternity, with the responsibility we all have to heed to the voice of the Holy Spirit to guide the future of our Order. From the outset I invite you to play as proactive and decisive part in the Chapter as possible, for each and every one of us is expected to build up the Chapter each day, reflecting, praying, sharing, discerning and finally taking the decisions that will shed light on, and determine the future of our Order in the years to come.

We have come to Częstochowa from all over the world, on *a pilgrimage* that began when we first embarked on the preparatory work for the Chapter in 2022. These two years of work have been used the methodology that you all know, and the one we shall be using at this Chapter, to try to arrive here prepared to discover what the Lord is asking of us. We would like to commend ourselves in a special way to Our Lady of Częstochowa, praying that she will show us the way to Our Lord, keeping us in her memory during all these days of our mission here, and helping us when we may feel discouraged.

Moreover, as you know, the idea of coming to Częstochowa was confirmed at the meeting of Provincial Superiors with the General Government in the autumn of 2022. The war in Russia and Ukraine had broken out, with huge repercussions that also affected our Brothers in the Drohobycz

Community in Ukraine which belongs to the Polish Province. Coming here to celebrate the General Chapter is also a sign of closeness, solidarity, hospitality and support for and with the Polish Province, the Brothers at Drohobycz and all the victims of this, and all other wars, which are always senseless and contrary to the love and peace of God. Therefore, over these days I invite you to pray at this Shrine of Peace, especially for peace and the end of all war and violence in the world.

2. An experience of synodality and discernment

In recent years we have been hearing a great deal spoken about 'synodality', so much so that it has become a central theme in the Church, which has decided to dedicate two synods of bishops to this topic. As you know, as we are celebrating our Chapter, the second session of the synod is sitting in Rome. It is not simply one more topic to be dealt with in the Church, it is the topic, because synodality expresses the very nature of the Church, its shape, its style, its mission (Rome, 18.09.2021). The Church of the 21st century will be synodal or nothing.

It is the style and the concrete way of being Church: *walking together as the people of God*, listening to all, especially to the most fragile and vulnerable, listening also to non-believers, and above all listening to the Holy Spirit, to discern the pathway He is asking us to follow and to which He is committing Himself to us. It is therefore also the style and the concrete manner *of being and living consecrated life and our Order in particular*.

The Order has been participating in this synodal journey in the Church through the various stages and experiences that we have lived through in recent years, and taking part in various ways in preparing for the synod. The fact is that it has been present in our Order for a long time and we would like to see it become more and more widespread, not only at chapter meetings or assemblies, but also our daily lives, in the mission, and in the life of our centres and communities.

I invite you all to experience this General Chapter with a deep sense of synodality. The entire Hospitaller Family of St John of God has been moving forward, as the People of God, since the preparatory stage, listening to each other and welcoming all the contributions of all the members of our family, and of the sick and the people we care for in our Centres, and of their families.

In this synodal event, which is our General Chapter, we intend to set out once again to walk together, listening to everything we have received and listening to each other, fraternally welcoming the contributions of all. Moreover, in order to be real, synodality needs us to listen to the Holy Spirit, because it is He who is guiding the Church and our Order. Without Him, we run the risk of losing our way.

This means that during the Chapter we have to perform discernment, listening to what the Holy Spirit is currently telling the Order in order to continue our journey in the service of the sick and needy, in the manner and spirit of St. John of God.

Synodality and discernment are inseparable. Let us prepare ourselves to live this valuable experience of the General Chapter, *walking together* as a hospitaller people and community, listening to and discerning what Our Lord is telling us. Let us do so boldly, fearlessly, trusting in the One who is our

guide, always firmly grounded in our identity, in the charism and the mission which the Holy Spirit inspired in our Founder, Saint John of God.

The methodology will help us along this path, this process. We all need to stand committed with great openness of mind and heart to welcome in whatever new things arise and to discard what is no longer useful, even if we feel very attached to them. In this process, reflecting and sharing with others is important, but prayer and silence above all are needed, in order to make room for the Spirit, as the voice we must heed, because it is the voice that will lighten the Order's path forward now and in the future.

3. Hospitality in a changing world

This is the motto we have chosen for the Chapter, intended as a means of drawing our attention to the key issues that we must always keep in mind: who we are, what we are for, and the world in which we live and develop.

Hospitality¹ must always be present because this is what identifies us. It is the precious gift we have received from the Lord, which the Order has been developing and bringing to life for almost five hundred years.

Over time it has been expressed in many versions and forms in all the places where the Order has been present. But it has always been a question of showing merciful love, compassion for suffering people and sensitivity to the needs of others, being true icons of the depths of God's mercy or as Pope Francis says: "becoming neighbours to those who are vulnerable or fragile."²

Hospitality has written memorable pages in the history of our Order, but also in recent history, such as in the Ebola epidemic, now ten years ago, in places engaged in armed conflict, where we have been caring for the excluded, the forgotten and the needy.

As I have said on other occasions, hospitality is the answer, the alternative to most of our world's problems. Faced by war and violence, it responds with peace and respect for the rights of each person; faced by exclusion and immigration, it welcomes all people as brothers and sisters because they are all children of God, the Father of all; faced by exploitation and the abuse of the weakest people, hospitality proposes freedom, justice and care for the most vulnerable people.

This great gift of Our Lord must be fashioned to make it appropriate for the situation in each place and in every age, as our Brothers have always done up to the present day. It is now up to us to do the same today, especially as we look ahead to the future.

Today's world has been undergoing constant changes for some time now. It is a dynamic change, in which things, ideas, slogans, projects, relationships and everything in general are short-lived. They are being quickly overtaken by something different, and not always better, but new. We live in a constant

¹ Cf. Constitutions of the OHSJD. Art. 2

² Cf. Pope Francis. Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*: On fraternity and social friendship. 2020. NO. 80

need of novel things. This also applies to institutions, in forms of governance and management and also at the legal level and the provision of care.

Wars are still being waged, and the threats that seemed to have disappeared are once again emerging. Ever more people are displaced, marginalised and poor. Globalisation is bringing many positive improvements, but it is also globalising poverty, violence, and so on. In short, ours is a world where many positive and innovative things are being done in all areas, but it is also faced with new difficulties and needs that are being created.

Whereas the first and second Enlightenment were accompanied by the eager expectation of a revolution that would bring a better future, today's young people do not connect their hatred of the present state of society and those who are responsible for it, and have with a hopeful inner eschatology: today's young people see their future and the world as very dark. There are some glimmers of hope in attempts to seek alternative, non-commercial lifestyles... the present moral turmoil will most likely take on an ideological and political shape of its own in the coming years in a confrontation with social, political and spiritual changes.³

Confronted by this dynamically changing world, we are being called upon to respond with the same Hospitality as ever, but with the openness, flexibility and creativity necessary for it to continue to be effective. There are many challenges ahead of us, and we have seen this in the work the whole Order has been doing in the sensing groups. We will see it again in the coming days. It will require good discernment and a great openness on the part of our Order to discover the answers that are being asked of us in the mission, in our facilities and above all in the way we practise hospitality, in our manner of being hospitallers.

If Christianity wants to contribute to cultivating a global society, only a kenotic Christianity free of all desire for power and narrow-mindedness can do it. This world does not need a Christian empire or a Christian ideology, the only Christianity that can contribute something must be ecumenically open and ready to serve those in need.⁴

4. Following in the footsteps of Saint John of God, our Founder.

Following in the footsteps of St. John of God means following in the footsteps of the merciful and compassionate Christ of the Gospel, especially with the sick, the poor and the needy. The Holy Spirit raised up this experience and this gift in St. John of God, which we call the "*charism of hospitality*".

This gift of Our Lord to Saint John of God completely changed his life and radically turned it in the direction of hospitality, to do good to those he found in need. Never again would he lack the strength and energy of the Spirit, the same Spirit that breathed on Jesus' disciples on the Day of Pentecost, to practise hospitality, in the manner of Jesus Christ, the Good Samaritan for anyone he found injured and abandoned.

³ Halík, Tomás. The Afternoon of Christianity. Courage for transformation. Barcelona 2023. P. 165

⁴ Halík, Tomás. Op.cit. P.151

And all for the love of God!⁵ All this he did it all for the love of God, because he had personally experienced being the injured man, abandoned by the wayside and welcomed, healed and loved by Our Lord, who had taken pity on him and had given him a new life. It was an experience that was revealed in all its power in what we know as his conversion, but it never left him again. It was transformed into joy, love and service in hospitality, to give to the most vulnerable men and women the same love and compassion that he had received from Our Lord. He became passionate about a suffering and needy humanity - and all for the love of God!

That is why I wrote in my letter wishing you all a happy Feast of St John of God in 2023, "He knew what God was asking of him,"⁶ when he heard that a fire had broken out at the Royal Hospital. He did not hesitate for a second. Urged on by Our Lord he threw himself into the burning Hospital, without seeing or thinking about the threat it posed to his life, and little by little he pulled out all the sick. The fire and smoke was so huge that no-one expected him to survive it, yet he emerged unharmed, only *his eyebrows singed*, to the amazement and joy of all those present, and they were many.

This is how John of God increasingly attracted the admiration of those who knew him. Indeed, Castro says at the end of his account of this episode: *"And we could mention many of these things that had happened in his life, which for the sake of brevity have been left unsaid"*.⁷ His testimony and his way of life soon attracted followers and disciples, creating a movement of hospitality that has endured to the present day.

This charismatic experience of St. John of God is what we call the *"founding experience"*, in which all of us who have been called to follow the Lord in the spirit of St. John of God, whom we acknowledge as our Founder, participate. And many others are also attracted by his testimony and the witness borne by his followers to live and practise hospitality, and become good Samaritans for those who suffer.

I believe that we must always, and especially in the times in which we are living, view the present and the future of the Order and of the Gospel-driven hospitality of St. John of God, with hope and confidence. The key lies in living the founding experience that our Founder lived. This is the radical experience which gave birth to the Order, which has sustained it and which will give it a future. As long as there are people, both religious and lay, who have a sensitive and open heart to sympathise with and dedicate themselves to the service of people in need, hospitality in the spirit of St. John of God will remain strong and alive. Its strength lies neither in the number, nor in whether we have many or few facilities, but in St. John of God's staunch initial experience, which today continues to be manifested by many Brothers and Co-workers who are passionate about serving the suffering, who, when faced by any need, know "what God is asking of them", and give themselves and serve without any hesitation.

Pope Francis told us in his audience to the participants of the 2019 General Chapter: *"May the cause of humanity resonate in you as God's cause. When this is so, and mindful of being one family, you will be able to place yourselves at all times at the service of a wounded and sick world. Surrounded by so many signs of death, look to the Gospel figure of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10,15-37)... His concern for his endangered neighbour's life brings out the best of his humanity and leads him to lovingly pour oil and*

⁵ Cf. Letters of St. John of God. Luis Bautista 11 and 15; Gutierre Lasso 7; 1 Duchess of Sesa 10 and 3 DS 16.

⁶ Etayo, J. He knew what God was asking of him. Circular letter to the Order. 8 March 2023

⁷ Francisco de Castro. History of the life and holy works of John of God. Chapter XIII

wine on the wounds of the man he has found half-dead. ***Concealed within this act of pure altruism and great sense of humanity lies the secret of your identity as Hospitallers***".⁸

This experience lies at the heart of our identity, it is our true root. That is why it is always important to stay alert to ensure that it is never lacking. Especially at this General Chapter, we must also discern it. It is this that makes it possible for hospitality to live on, and what will ensure that more people will fall in love with it and follow it, because it proposes a different and alternative way of understanding, and above all, living, what Pope Francis is now proposing in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*.⁹

*In the wounds of our world we can see in an authentically Christian way the invisible God and touch a mystery that would otherwise be difficult to touch... In Jesus' description of the Last Judgement we read that the authenticity of their faith and their belonging to Christ was demonstrated by those who demonstrated an effective love for those in need, even without having an explicitly Christian motivation. They did not know that by so doing they were serving Christ. Jesus said that His real disciple it is not the person who calls on his name, who says "Lord, Lord", but the one who does the will of God... to love and serve the little ones, his favourites.*¹⁰ This is the experience of Saint John of God, and the experience to which all of us who belong to the Hospitaller Family are called.

5. Conclusion: A Chapter for Hope.

We have reached the end of the Sexennium. It has been a period marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced us to change and postpone many activities, visits, etc., but above all it has been a new experience of humility, suffering, death, loneliness and also solidarity. We have learned to use other means of communication. Brothers, Co-workers and many Guests in our Centres lost their lives during the pandemic. The war in Ukraine and other conflicts, most recently last year in Israel, have also left their mark on the life of our world and our communities. We have devoted time and resources to all these things, as you all know.

Despite what I have just been saying, we have been able to implement a substantial part of the Order's government plan. The life of our Institute, as always, has been very intense, with many beautiful and positive things, and others less so, with some very wonderful moments but also other complicated and difficult times.

I want to thank Our Lord, Our Mother Our Lady of Patronage, St. John of God and our saints and blessed for the permanent support they have given me to be able to carry out the service and responsibility as Superior General.

I would also like to thank the General Councillors, Brothers Joaquim Erra, Pascal Ahodegnon, José Augusto Gaspar Louro, Joseph Smith, Dairon Meneses and Vincent Kochamkunnel, with whom I have shared this responsibility and who have helped me so much during this six-year term, for their support and their work. Thank you for your closeness and understanding and for the service you have rendered to the Order.

I thank Brother André Sène, Secretary and Procurator General, for his good service which has been so important for the sound running of the Curia and of the Order. Thanks also to Brother Dario Vermi,

⁸ Pope Francis. Address to the members of the LXIX General Chapter of the Order of St. John of God. Rome, 2.02. 2019

⁹ Pope Francis. Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*: On fraternity and social friendship. 2020. NO. 8

¹⁰ Halík, Tomás. Op. cit. p. 172.

Postulator General, to Brother Ángel López, Head of the Missions and International Cooperation Office, to Brother Benigno Ramos, Head of the Health and Social Pastoral Commission, to Brother Rudolf Knopp, our Bursar General until March 2022. All together, and with everyone, we have sought to live and embody the spirit of the Hospitaller Family of St. John of God. You have all been of great support to me in carrying forward the mission of animation and governance of the Order.

There are of course many others whom I must thank for their support, their work and their service to the Order. In order not to repeat myself too much, I will do so in my sexennial report.

Thank you all very much. I also apologise to everyone for my own shortcomings and because I am sure I have been mistaken many times. My apologies also to the whole Order for anything that has not been fair, for not always making the appropriate and necessary response and for where I have been wrong, especially with specific people and with our whole Family. As I have said on other occasions, I have always done everything seeking the best for the Order and for all, and in any case any mistakes I have made have been the result of my own limitations.

Dear Brothers and Co-workers present here, next year the Church will be celebrating a Jubilee Year, and Pope Francis in his Bull of Indiction spoke of hope: *Hope does not disappoint (Romans 5:5).*¹¹ In anticipation of the Jubilee, I would like to invite you all to experience the General Chapter as a time of hope for our entire Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God. A hope which is rooted in faith and trust in God, and which is brought to life in the service of charity, in hospitality, every single day.

Let us be faithful to the Spirit of the Lord during the Chapter, so that we may welcome, full of hope, the new phase that we will have to experience after the Chapter, knowing that Our Lord who has called us will accompany and sustain us in order to continue to make the hospitality of Saint John of God visible in the present and in the future.

I wish you all a fruitful General Chapter. May the Lord and St. John of God help us to give the best of ourselves for the good of our beloved Order.

¹¹ Pope Francis. Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025 *Spes non confundit*. Rome, 9.05.2024

Message by the Co-workers attending the 70th General Chapter

Dear Brothers

At the end of our participation in the 70th General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, it is our wish to share with you our feeling of profound gratitude to God and to all the brothers.

Thank you for involving us in the process of deep reflection at this Chapter on behalf of all coworkers.

We return to our Provinces, highly motivated, and strongly aware of the work that is required on the part of Brothers and Coworkers, to ensure that the Charism of Hospitality in our changing world, is sustained, evident and coherent throughout all our services.

We embrace with enthusiasm, confidence, and courage all the challenges of the times, ready to walk together on a path towards full realization of hospitality, we invite you to join us with an open heart and mind, welcoming our feelings.

Here are our wishes and dreams for the future:

- We consider it crucial to promote a model of governance that is practiced in a way that is consistent with the Charism, that reflects co-responsibility, that is implemented and evaluated without losing our essence, and that promotes synergies and a greater exchange of knowledge and global experiences, without frontiers.
- We believe it is important that we strengthen the global identity of our hospitaller family to create a common corporate brand as a worldwide health and social organization, and a common employee brand for students and coworkers to attract and retain talent.
- We need an authentic charismatic renewal, deepening the formation of brothers, coworkers and volunteers, so that we work together and move forward with honesty, guided by the Spirit of St. John of God for the benefit of his works. We should be conscious of our history, our culture and charismatic identity but adapt to the new times. We must strengthen all that makes us different: Pastoral Care, Bioethics and Charismatic Management.
- We should be pro-active and respond collectively in crisis situations.
- We would like to see that the development and recognition of hospitaller vocations is encouraged, to provide mentoring and to support the continuity of our services. The Holy Spirit works in many different ways.
- We want collaborative leadership to be fostered.
- We would like to see encouragement for the search for innovative solutions in addressing vulnerabilities, including the promotion of research, the humanized application of new technologies, health education and good environmental practices.
- We would like to see models of care that encourage continuous improvement in all its processes, that reinforce bioethical and pastoral practice, that recognize the importance of the voice and experience of those assisted, that promote good health and that bring care closer to the community. Let us accompany the sick and most needy.
- We consider it important to have an honest and sustainable commitment to make the consensus that emerges from this chapter a priority input for all provinces.

The Order is life, we ask you to have confidence in God. We coworkers are with you, to face the challenges of emerging needs in this changing world together. We are part of this mission and it is our wish to extend it to reach more people in need.

May the Holy Spirit continue to enlighten the work of the General Chapter and the election of the new General Government. **Have faith, have confidence and BE BOLD!**

Message from the Working Group for the Promotion of Cultural Heritage

Since February 2024, the Sisters and Co-workers responsible for museums, archives and libraries of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God in Europe and the Sisters Hospitallers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus have established a permanent Working Group, and we are writing to you with this message:

Our cultural heritage is a magnificent means of transmitting values and creating bonds between the members of the Hospitaller Family, so why not put it to greater use?

In our ever-changing world, this cultural heritage is more vulnerable than ever, but at the same time it can provide valuable support for our mission of hospitality, because it bears witness to our identity, our spirituality, our values and the purpose of our actions.

But this cultural heritage needs each and every one of you.

Bequeathed to us by our founders and by those who came before us, we are all responsible for it today. Each province, each community, each centre preserves a precious, unique and indispensable part of it. We trust that all of you will support us in preserving this heritage in your own Provinces so that we can take advantage of it today and so that future generations can also benefit from it.

Our group is here to help you preserve and enhance this shared heritage.

Our Working Group was created to reflect on the role of cultural heritage in the transmission of the charism. By undertaking joint projects and exchanging experiences, we aim to preserve, share and revitalise our common heritage at the service of Hospitality.

We have chosen to begin our work by creating a shared database on the iconography of our founders, which will be useful to all the Provinces for multiple purposes. Other projects will follow - we have no shortage of creative ideas for sharing and making Hospitality shine!

70th GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE HOSPITALER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD

CLOSING ADDRESS

Brother Pascal Ahodegnon

Prior General

7 November 2024

1. Introduction

Dear Brothers and Co-workers of the Saint John of God Family,

We have reached the end of our 70th General Chapter under the title *"Hospitality in a Changing World"*, which we have celebrated for four weeks here in Poland, a stone's throw from the Shrine of the Black Madonna in Czestochowa.

I thank Our Lord for having poured our His Holy Spirit into us that throughout these days, guiding us in the deliberations of the Chapter and, above all, opening our hearts and minds to listen to the cry of world of suffering world, discerning the will of God. The spiritual environment and the opportunity given to us by the Pauline Fathers at the Shrine fostered a climate of discernment and prayer.

I would like to thank all the Members of the Saint John of God Family for the trust you have placed in me, as the Superior General, to guide the life of our Order: it is a call from Our Lord to deliver this service to the Church and to the Order. It is a great responsibility which I am taking on with faith and hope, knowing that you will not fail to help me, and trusting in the grace of God who will always be ready to support me along the way despite my poverty and limitations. I am placing this Sexennium under the protection of Mary, Our Lady of the Patronage, St John of God, our Founder, and all the Saints and Blesseds of the Order.

I thank the Chapter for the confidence it has given to the Brothers with whom I shall be carrying out this mission in communion and with co-responsibility: to each one I offer my heartfelt gratitude. From now on we shall be in will need of the support and prayers of the whole Saint John of God Family.

2. A Good Samaritan for our age

John of God was a great saint of the 16th century Church and his testimony of life remains equally relevant today. He was a man strongly touched by the grace of the Lord, a man who did not resist divine grace. He committed himself to the generous fulfilment of God's will in his life under the guidance of St John of Avila, his spiritual director. St John of God is called the Saint of charity, the father of the poor, because he truly identified with the marginalised, to whom he devoted his best energies with true charity. May he give us the apostolic courage and the sensitive hearts we need to alleviate the sufferings of Christ who always knocks at our gates in the guise of the beneficiaries of our mission.

3. The pillars for shaping our future

We have reached a turning point in our journey together, at a challenging time, but one that holds out great promise for the years to come. Confronted by the challenges that await us, our commitment must be profound and bold. I would like to highlight a few points, fleshed out by the lines of action adopted by the Chapter that will guide our steps and direct our mission over the next six years.

a) Rekindling the flame of our vocation and consecration

In a world this is changing at an unprecedented pace, it is essential to return to the source of our commitment. The message of the Gospel and the example of our founder, St. John of God, invite us to be boldly radical and with radiant simplicity. Let us root ourselves every day in an authentic spiritual life, nourished by prayer, discernment and fraternal support. Let formation, initial or continuing, help us to deepen our charism and embrace the realities of our age with faith and hope. All together, let us keep the spirit of our consecration alive, so that our every action bears the imprint of Christ's love.

b) Transmitting and sharing a common culture of hospitality

Our mission can only be fully deployed in communion. To all the lay people who share our mission of hospitality: you are our travelling companions, with co-responsibility for this adventure which is also yours. Together, let us build up inclusive "governance" in which everyone, Brothers and lay co-workers, feel part of the mission. Let us forge a strong and exciting common identity, capable of overcoming cultural boundaries and uniting people around the values that unite us. Let us ensure that the formation we offer everyone is imbued with our charism, but also receptive to heed contemporary issues. Let us encourage participatory leadership, based on respect, listening and mutual trust, and enthusiastically pass on this torch of hospitality to future generations.

c) Cultivating boldness and creativity to meet emerging challenges

We must be attentive to new forms of vulnerability and suffering. The needs of the most vulnerable people are changing and we have the responsibility to innovate in order to respond to them carefully and effectively. Let us improve the way we care by incorporating the bioethical dimensions, involving the beneficiaries, paying special attention to people with psychological problems, suffering from loneliness, the homeless and those living through their final days of life. Let our care be recognised for its humanity, humility and spiritual quality, respecting the dignity and the freedom of every individual.

By working together, Brothers and lay co-workers, the future of our Order can rely on our ability to embody these guidelines with courage, respect, inclusiveness and determination.

May the Holy Spirit enlighten and strengthen us so that every act we perform in our mission reveal to all the love and welcome of Christ. Together, let us advance with faith and perseverance along this challenging and profoundly liberating path.

d) Calmly discerning our structures

The Hospitaller Order has reached a turning point in its history. Some of our structures no longer reflect today's world. The numbers speak for themselves: we must urgently rethink our organisation. Refusing to evolve is tantamount to abandoning our mission of hospitality. It is essential for us to explore new avenues, to think in terms of interprovincial collaboration or even mergers, in order to optimise our resources and our impact. Let us step out of our comfort zone, out of our routine, out of those habits that prevent us from changing! We know what we have to do: embody hospitality that is contemporary, innovative and based on collaboration.

Our government is responsible for leading the Order towards this transformation. Collective discernment, led by the Holy Spirit and fuelled by everyone's ideas, is essential.

Let us analyse the data objectively, and boldly embark on the path of change. Let not fear paralyse us. Let us seize this unique opportunity to perpetuate the work of St. John of God. Let us act boldly, innovatively and looking forward with hope. Together, let us build up a solid and relevant Order for the 21st century.

4. Style of government

We want our Government to choose dialogue, as its starting point to strengthen communion, collegiality with the Provincial Superiors, while recognising their responsibility and authority. And synodality, drawing on our experience during the preparation of this Chapter to create more room for all the members of the St John of God Family to hear what they have to say.

We must enhance the work of all the regions, in coordination with the General Curia through the General Commissions. The members of Our Family will be more closely involved in the work of the commissions.

5. Thanks to Brother Jesús Etayo

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Brother Jesús Etayo, who has been our Superior General for these past twelve years. I thank you for your unshakeable love for the Order and the Church, expressed with generosity and great dedication during these years, filled with passion for Christ and St John of God.

Affection, abilities, prowess, esteem and understanding. This is how I would like to express my deep appreciation and gratitude for your service to the Order over these long and complex years. Mindfully and clear-sightedly, you were able to move when beset by the most complicated challenges ever! With the clear intention to avoid leaving any room for decisions that would have exceeded the boundaries respect for human dignity. Under your guidance, we learnt how to overcome the new challenges, acting rationally and above all humanely. Facing adverse events (Ebola, wars, Covid 19...the economic crisis etc) and coming out of them, limiting the damage, For me, this was your real humanitarian achievement. Your skill at leading us through the crisis with empathy and integrity will leave an important and lasting mark on me, and on others. I hope to continue to build on these solid Values that you laid down as core values that you have always put first, the future of our Hospitaller Order, so that I can do honour to your service by virtue of the future successes of us all. Thank you for living up to them: you have been an inspiration to me.

I wish you all the best for your future, and I am sure that you will continue to serve our beloved Order with the same courage and commitment as always. I certainly know that I will be able to continue to rely on your experience and your closeness.

Mt thanks also go to Brother Brian O'Donnell and Brother Donatus Forkan, former Superiors General of the Order, for their support, their vision for the Order and their closeness. Here I would also like to call to mind Brother Pascual Piles, our former Prior General and Brother Giampietro Luzzato, our former General Councillor.

6. Thanks to my Brothers on the previous General Council

I am most grateful to the Brothers in the Government and at the General Curia during the sexennium that has just ended: Brothers Joaquim Erra, José Augusto Gaspar Louro, Joseph Smith, Dairon Orley

Meneses Caro, and Vincent Kochamkunnel, as well as Brother André Sene, Secretary and Procurator General, Brother Angel Lopez, Director of the Missions and International Cooperation Office, Brother Benigno Ramos as the head of the General Commission, Brother Dario Vermi, Postulator and Prior of La Nocetta. I pay a special tribute and pray for the eternal repose of my dear friend and Brother José Luis Martinez: I am convinced from this from Heaven he is praying for us. Together with Brother Jesús Etayo we have shared the animation of the Order over the past six years with serenity and trust in the Lord and St John of God.

To the Brothers who will be leaving the General Curia to return to their Provinces, I extend my fervent best wishes, confident that they will continue serving the Order with dedication and enthusiasm.

7. Thanks to the Brothers of the new General Council

I sincerely thank the Brothers who will form the new General Council with me, for their willingness and commitment: Joaquim Erra, Saji Mullankuzhi, Etienne Sene, David Lynch, and John Jung. As a government we have a great responsibility, and our commitment will be all the greater; we have accepted this service to the Order and are convinced that Our Lord and St. John of God will be our guide, enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

I would also like to thank Brother Dairon Orley Meneses, for his readiness to accept the office of Secretary General.

I trust that, all together, we will be able to work as a team and in a climate of fraternity and mutual trust, for the good of the entire St John of God Hospitaller Family.

8. Acknowledgements

I would like express my thanks to all those who have attended the General Chapter: thank you for your support, for your closeness and for the intense work you have accomplished during these four weeks.

In a special way, and hoping that I have not forgotten anyone, I would like to thank the Polish Province in particular, for the way they prepared and organised the Chapter: they did it superbly, and gave us a practical demonstration of Hospitality in every sense of the term. I thank Brother Franciszek Salezy Chmiel, the Provincial Superior, and all his team; it has been an unforgettable experience for us all. I ask Brother Franciszek to convey our thanks to all the Brothers and Co-workers of the Province and in particular the Superiors and Directors who have offered us their hospitality. The visits to the Centres and other places have been extremely enjoyable. Thank you for all that you have done for us.

Thanks also to the General Curia team which prepared the Chapter, and the members of the Preparatory Commission under Brother Joaquim Erra, to the sensing groups: the whole family of Saint John of God worldwide! to those who took charge of the issues concerning logistics – Brother José Augusto Gaspar Louro and all the Curia co-workers: Pietro Cacciarelli, Augusto Fabbroni, Chiara Donati, documentation, etc., coordinated by Brother André Sene.

Thanks to the Brothers who served on the various Chapter Commissions: the Coordination Commission, the Drafting Commission and the Welfare Commission. Thanks to our Brothers in Solidarity Action for their participation producing the daily Chapter reports and to all our guests of our mission who have all contributed in one way or another to this journey.

Thanks to Matthieu Daum for the journey which started more than a year ago with a methodology involving the whole Order, and also for being with us; and to the secretaries of the groups.

To Father Cristo Rey, for his spiritual accompaniment, and Sister Renata Ryszkowska.

Thanks to Brother Thomas Osorio for his service as Chapter Secretary and to the Commission that revised the Minutes of the General Chapter, Brother Robert Moor and Brother Vianney Welch. This was undoubtedly a difficult but very necessary task. Thanks to Brother Donatus Forkan, who presided during the elective phase, and the scrutineers, Brother Ignatius and Brother Louis.

Thanks to the team of interpreters led by Ms Agata, and the Korean and Vietnamese-speaking interpreters. In such a diverse assembly, where different languages are spoken, your cooperation and work were essential to allowing the Chapter to run smoothly. Many thanks. My acknowledgement and thanks also go to the technical team, Messrs Bartosz and Jakub.

Very special thanks to the Co-workers at the Chapter Secretariat who supported us all the way, and did such a magnificent job: Brother André, Yvonne Nolan, Daria and Grzegorz, Klaus Mutschlechner. Thanks also to Pierre Antoine Chevalier, Antoine Soubrier and the whole team of the Polish Province for communications, and to Brother Hubert Matusiewicz, in charge of the health of all the Chapter members.

I thank Brother André Sene for preparing the liturgy booklet with the committee and for coordinating the entire liturgy. I also thank the priests and bishops who presided at the Eucharist.

Lastly, I would like to thank the staff of this hotel who have welcomed us throughout the Chapter. We have had a very good time, and all the staff were at our disposal, trying to do all they could for the smooth running of the Chapter and the well-being of the Chapter members. Many thanks to Mrs Milena, the manager of the Arche hotel.

9. Conclusion

"Hospitality in a changing world": these few words sound like a call, the one we chose to guide this 70th General Chapter. It is a call born out of deep reflection, led by more than a hundred groups in our Provinces, who explored the ways for renewing hospitality in a changing world.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, here we are, brothers, co-workers and lay people, forming a vibrant mosaic of over 110 souls, united in the same fraternal gathering for a month. In these first two weeks, with our lay co-workers, we forged strong bonds, exchanged ideas and hopes, and mapped out the path together for the next six years.

Like the grain of wheat that gives itself to the earth to be reborn as an ear of wheat, we aspire to be transformed, to 'die' to our individuality in order to grow in unity, mutual help and cooperation. It is in this spirit of communion, the precious legacy of our Father St. John of God, that we will be able to respond to the cry of the most vulnerable people, who suffer in body and soul.

Let us heed the suffering of the world, let us go forward boldly and confidently, hand in hand. We are not afraid to descend into the depths, because Our Lord, Our Lady of Częstochowa and St John of

God are watching over each one of us, just as they are watching over our brothers, co-workers and volunteers in Ukraine, the Holy Land, Benin, Cameroon and Mozambique.

The St John of God Family gathered here during this Chapter demonstrated its solidarity by raising 140,367 Euros for the project to be implemented in Ukraine.

A wish you a safe journey home, and ask you please to convey our warmest greetings to the whole St John of God Family, and our sympathy to all those who are sick. Do not forget to pray for the General Government.

May Our Lord, our merciful Father, Our Lady of Czestochowa, who have accompanied us throughout the Chapter, the Archangel Raphael, our Elder Brother, our Father Saint John of God, and all our Saints and Blesseds accompany us, protect us, guide us and help us throughout the sexennium that is about to begin.

Thanks to you all.

ACCOMPANYING NOTE TO THE FINAL DECLARATIONS OF THE 70TH GENERAL CHAPTER

To all the members of the Hospitaller Family,

The 70th General Chapter of our Order, held in Częstochowa, was a powerful experience of universal fraternity, synodality and reflection on our mission of hospitality in a world in a state of transformation. Under the protection of the Black Madonna of Jasna Góra, we discerned together the direction to take in the next few years, drawing inspiration from our charism of Saint John of God.

The final declarations are the fruit of this intense work and spiritual journey. They bear witness to our common desire to strengthen our mission in key areas: the transmission of the charism, governance, financial management, emerging realities and the care of our common home.

A new phase: acting in the spirit of the Chapter

We are now entering an essential phase: the practical implementation of these guidelines in our provinces, communities and centres. These declarations are not just words, but calls to action in response to the specific challenges of our time.

- **Transmission of the charism:** let us design formation programmes that bear witness to the beauty and relevance of our vocation to hospitality. Let us commit ourselves to a universal culture of hospitality, tailored to reflect local circumstances.
- **Governance and collaboration:** Let us promote an inclusive and participatory style of governance, making the most of the talents and skills of all our brothers and co-workers.
- **Ecological commitment:** let us respond to the urgent call to take care of Creation by implementing concrete and sustainable actions.
- **Responding to emerging needs:** Let us be there for the most vulnerable people, whether they are facing mental health challenges, exclusion, isolation or migration.
- **Solidarity and finance:** Let us strengthen our charismatic work, while ensuring its viability thanks to transparent management and strategic collaboration.
- **The life of the Brothers:** Further to the reflections of the Chapter, we, Brothers Hospitallers, reaffirm our commitment to live our vocation with spiritual depth and fraternity, serving the sick and the needy with renewed dedication. We also seek to intensify cooperation with our lay co-workers, in a spirit of mutual trust and respect, so that together we can bear witness to the mission of hospitality. Finally, we are particularly attentive to our elderly and sick brothers, caring for them and appreciating the value of their experience.

Building the future of hospitality, together

Meetings of the General Definitory 'enlarged' to include the laity will be scheduled during the sexennium. This way of involving Brothers and Co-workers is based on a dynamic synergy combining the spiritual mission of some with the technical and organisational expertise of others. This approach fosters open dialogue, shared decision-making and the effective implementation of projects, making the work of the Council more inclusive and focused on the concrete needs of the Order.

Brothers and co-workers, let us commit ourselves enthusiastically and with determination to this new stage that is opening up before us. May the spirit of fraternity and service that animated the General Chapter guide us as we put these guidelines into practice.

By pooling our strengths and our talents, we will be able to respond to the challenges of our time and make the charism of Saint John of God shine out among those who are suffering. Let us never forget

that every gesture, every word, every action, however small, contributes to building a fairer and more fraternal world, in the image of the Kingdom of God.

A call to action

As you experienced during your sensing work, I urge you to **take up these final declarations as a roadmap**, and to launch, in your local, regional or inter-provincial environments, practical projects and initiatives that reflect this collective commitment. The success of this new phase depends on how far we are able to work together, in communion with the entire Hospitaller Family.

And our work as a Family is beginning precisely by announcing the scheduling of the key events that will affect the entire Order for the new sexennium. During this period we shall celebrate two Provincial Chapters, namely in 2026 and 2030. I will be present at all the Provincial Chapters in 2026, while some Chapters in 2030 will be presided over by the General Councillors. The calendar for the 2030 Provincial Chapters will be published at a later date based on the reconfiguration of the Provinces, some of which have already begun the amalgamation process.

The General Canonical Visitations will take place on the dates scheduled. I will personally conduct some of them, while for others I will only attend the closure. The Provincial Superiors will have to make arrangements with the General Councillor who will be presiding over the visitation in order to organise it in the best possible way, taking into account the local circumstances.

Every year, with the exception of the last one, a meeting will be held with the Major Superiors to strengthen the animation of the Order's governance in a spirit of collegiality and synodality to implement the declarations of the General Chapter.

Only two courses of preparation for solemn profession will be held, and they will be shorter in length than in the past. I would therefore ask the Provincial Superiors to organise programmes, courses and formation days at the provincial, interprovincial or regional level, to ensure that the Brother Scholastics are adequately accompanied to make their solemn profession.

Furthermore, during the General Chapter, the capitulars examined various articles of the General Statutes, with a view to making changes to them. The articles approved are 120 and 124, and the changes are announced in this publication.

The General Curia will update the General Statutes in the various languages and will send the text with the changes to all the Provinces.

Conclusions

Now that we have completed the programme for the sexennium, we can begin with our commitments, the meetings in which the entire Hospitaller Family will be involved and engaged, so that everything will run as smoothly as possible and the proposed objectives can be achieved.

In accordance with the approach outlined using the sensing method, let us prepare ourselves to *listen generatively* to everything that surrounds us. Without prejudging ourselves and others, let us open ourselves up confidently, and place our talents at the service of the Hospitaller mission.

This is why, together with my Council, we decided to propose this theme for this sexennium 2024-2030: ***Let us spread Hospitality!***

Take heart! Let us open up 'new spaces' for Hospitality, and following the example of our Founder, let us be creative in our response to the demands, appeals and needs of a changing world.

Entrusting this mission to the intercession of Our Lady of Częstochowa and Saint John of God, I thank you for your dedication and fidelity.

May these final declarations be for us a vehicle for renewing our commitment to hospitality.

Rome, 20 December 2025
Conversion of Saint John of God

Brother Pascal Ahodegnon, O.H.
Superior General

DECLARATIONS OF THE 70th GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD

1. Introduction

The members attending the 70th General Chapter of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God give thanks to Our Lord for the powerful sense of hospitality, fraternity, internationality and synodality they experienced from 15 October to 7 November 2024 in Czestochowa, Poland.

Over those intense days at the Chapter, the 66 Brothers and 19 Co-workers were clearly conscious of the closeness and the protection of the Black Madonna of Jasna Gora.

One touching experience, for which we are deeply grateful, was the invaluable support of the Polish Province, the Provincial Superior and the Brothers and Co-workers who accompanied us and were ready at every moment to look after us. During those days, our thoughts and prayers were often with Drohobycz (Ukraine) and Nazareth, where the Order is present with a community of Polish Brothers who are experiencing first-hand the consequences of war.

One important reason why Czestochowa had been chosen as the venue for the General Chapter was precisely to demonstrate the closeness and solidarity of the whole Order with all the people who are caught up in these immense tragedies. In the name of Hospitality and mindful of the suffering and deaths caused by war, we pray for peace to be restored, and for all the conflicts in today's world to be finally settled.

The Chapter was essentially the follow-up to the work that all the Provinces of the Order undertook during the preparatory phase, in order to get a clear picture of the current situation in each of them and in the Order as a whole (sensing). We are deeply grateful for the involvement of all the Brothers and Co-workers, professionals and volunteers, the guests in our care, and everyone else connected with the Order, who devoted their time and their concern for this work.

2. First phase of the Chapter: Our mission

In the first phase, which we spent with our Co-workers, we focused on certain key areas of our mission deemed to be particularly relevant to the future of the Order. In relation to the mission, the General Chapter adopted the following declaration:

a) Transmission of the charism

The Brothers and Co-workers (professionals, volunteers and benefactors) who make up the Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God, thank God for the charism of Hospitality we have received. We are called to pass on this gift which we share, by bearing witness to the hospitality of Saint John of God in a changing world, revealing above all by our deeds, the beauty and the necessity of our charism in the world today.

We are committed to continuing our formation, not only professionally but also in our charism and its wealth of values. We do this through the "School of Hospitality", and events to introduce and study the Order's charism, philosophy, ethos and values; learning from each other by exchanging experiences, team-building, mentoring, and using all the resources that help us to live, practise and transmit hospitality in our changing world.

We cultivate a universal culture of hospitality and respect its different expressions in terms of the places where the Hospitaller Family of Saint John of God is present.

We want to be a place where everyone can discover the call to live the vocation of hospitality and express it in its various forms: mission, formation, spirituality and celebration. For those who wish to take on a greater personal and spiritual commitment to the charism and mission of hospitality, we offer them the possibility to become associate members of the Order, as we have explained in the document of the same name, adopted by the General Curia in June 2024.

The General Chapter considers it necessary to share the best practices that exist in the Order regarding the transmission of the charism. It considers it urgent to find and form leaders to transmit our charism, especially based on personal experience, and urges us all to commit ourselves to transmitting the charism, using language that is comprehensible to today's world.

For the transmission of the charism we stress the importance of the personal witness and example set by each Member of the Family of Saint John of God.

b) Governance

To strengthen governance (government, management and administration) throughout the Order:

We are committed to appointing professionally qualified persons to managerial and administrative roles who embrace and foster the Order's values, ethos and philosophy. Both these requirements are crucial for anyone, whether Brothers or Co-workers, appointed to exercise any managerial or administrative responsibility in the Order,

We recognise that the responsibilities of governance and management are not only the responsibility of the Brothers, but also of the Co-workers. The General Chapter calls upon the whole Order to establish leadership formation in every Province, to foster a sense of belonging to the Family of St. John of God, to promote commitment to the universal mission of the Order, to share best practices wherever possible, and to promote leaders within the Institution to guarantee the charismatic management of our Centres.

We promote a collaborative style of governance, sensitive to environmental and ecological issues. Above all, it must be inclusive: ready to listen to the ideas and experiences of everyone involved, first and foremost the people in our care and their loved ones, Brothers, Co-workers, Volunteers, stakeholders and others. The Chapter urges the whole Order to work on moving beyond the hierarchical and rigid management structures towards transparent and participatory management.

We urge the General Curia: a) to develop new structures that facilitate mutual support between the General Government, the Provinces and the Regions; b) to encourage the Provinces to identify new juridic structures that are appropriate to enable us to perform our mission and guarantee the future of the Order's Centres and facilities.

We believe that in a world in continuous transformation, we have to present the Order's universal character as a global project of hospitality for the most vulnerable, sick and needy people, sharing commitment, values, best practices and charismatic experiences. This strengthens the significance of everyone's efforts and reinforces the attraction and the loyalty of our professionals, volunteers and benefactors.

c) Safeguarding

The members attending the General Chapter deem it necessary to continue making determined efforts to ensure that our centres and communities are safe places for everyone (Co-workers, the guests in our care, the Brothers, etc.), where any kind of abuse is prevented and action taken should it occur. We believe that any abuse is in total contradiction to the very meaning of our charism and mission.

We firmly declare the need to continue to implement formation plans, preventive actions and protocols, and to accompany and take appropriate action whenever any situation requires it, in accordance with the Order's and the Church's policies and criteria and the civil laws of the countries where the Order is present.

d) Finance

To strengthen our financial resilience we recommend: a) promoting alliances, partnerships and other forms of collaboration between centres and Provinces; b) fostering cooperation and networking with other institutions such as Religious Congregations, foundations and similar organizations operating in the social and health care field.

We deem it necessary to lay down common criteria for evaluating the charismatic and economic sustainability of our centres and projects, to ensure that they are consistent with our charism and our financial possibilities.

We consider it necessary to envisage the possibility of abandoning activities and facilities that are not economically and/or charismatically sustainable. Yet we also believe it important to remain sensitive to any charismatic and emblematic facilities that the Provinces or the Order can maintain financially, even if they are not totally financially self-sustainable. Where serious economic and financial difficulties arise, it is crucial for us to be proactive and to respond collectively and preventively.

We also believe it necessary to diversify our financial resources (public and private funds), to improve fund-raising by sharing best practices and to ensure the sound management of the centres and services by guaranteeing financial transparency and ethical criteria.

e) Emerging realities

The General Chapter encourages and urges the whole Order to continue expanding the mission of hospitality in the world, as a mandate from the Lord and the Church, to spread his merciful and compassionate love in the manner of St. John of God, through our works, services and care projects on behalf of the sick, poor and needy of our world. We are firmly committed to global health through prevention, training, research and innovation.

We wish to continue to spread hospitality in the world as an urgent and necessary response, focusing especially on the most fragile and vulnerable people and groups. Being conscious of reality and allowing ourselves to be affected by it, we urge the whole Family of St. John of God to respond to the extent of our possibilities to emerging needs, especially for those who are the most neglected.

We urge the whole Order to strengthen mental health care in particular, especially at the community level, and to prepare ourselves and be available to respond to the new health and social needs, such as addictions, loneliness, end-of-life care, homelessness, the problems arising from migration, wars, and others. We also encourage the Order to promote these responses through projects, programs and activities that go even than what is being done in the centres of the Order.

f) Care for the planet

During the preparation of this Chapter the sensing groups had identified ecology and care for the planet as a fundamental issue for our future world. We believe we are duty-bound to respond in hospitality to the call to care for the Earth and the urgent need to address climate change.

Mindful of this need and of the consequences it entails with regard to the health and impoverishment of many peoples and individuals, this General Chapter urges the entire Hospitaller Family of St John of God, personally and collectively, to continue working hard and resolutely for the care and protection of the environment through the implementation of concrete policies and actions, as we are invited to do

in the Order's document: "Caring for Creation for a Holistic Hospitality" A reflection on Environmental Ethics" of 2024. The Order, the Provinces and each of our Centres are responsible for working intensively to care for the environment by establishing appropriate strategies and actions.

As in other issues, we appreciate and encourage the Provinces to help each other by sharing their experiences and also offering technical support, where needed.

3. Second phase of the Chapter: Life of the Brothers

The second phase of the Chapter was only attended by the Brothers, and the deliberations focused on a few key areas for the life of the Brothers considered to be of particular importance for the future of the Order, The General Chapter approved the following declaration:

The General Chapter considers that today, in a changing world, Brothers of all ages can and must live a deeply spiritual, fraternal and apostolic consecrated life. Whether they are In formation, or actively engaged in the apostolate or living in retirement and in old age, every Brother always has his own mission and his own role in the community of Brothers and in the life of the Family of St. John of God.

a) Organisational structure of the Order

We urge all the Provinces to evaluate their current organizational structure and consider various options, discerning and adopting those that best meet their needs over the next six years.

The Chapter recommends the General Curia, consistently with its mission of animation and governance (and stewardship), to help and accompany the Provinces to evaluate possible restructuring options.

b) Brothers' Identity and Role

During the spiritual retreat the General Chapter welcomed this message from God: *Brothers, do not be afraid, I am with you*. We also know that our Brother and Founder St. John of God is with us.

We consider it vital for each Brother to live his identity as a consecrated person enthusiastically and with spiritual depth as a Brother of Saint John of God, regardless of the role or position he may have. By his life he is called to be a witness and a presence of hospitality wherever he may be. The Order gives primacy, wherever possible, for the Brother to live close by the side of the sick and needy.

As Brothers we must be authentic and always remain close to all the members of the Hospitaller Family, to ensure that the spirit of our Brother John of God will always continue to inspire, in our rapidly changing world.

c) Initial and Continuing Formation

With regard to the work of the Order's General General Commission on Vocations Promotion and Formation, of the sensing groups carried out in the pre-capitular phase and what emerged from the generative dialogue during the General Chapter, we recommend that:

- Formation must focus on discipleship of Jesus of Nazareth.
- Our charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit that leads us to be configured to the compassionate and merciful Christ of the Gospel in the manner of St. John of God (cf. Const. 2a).
- In the youth vocations promotion and pastoral ministry, we should make use of all the formats and resources available.
- Initial and continuing formation must deepen our understanding of hospitaller spirituality, emphasising Gospel kenosis.

The General Curia and the Provinces have the responsibility to:

- Promote knowledge and the application of the Order's Formation Document, which lays down the criteria for selecting candidates and the criteria for admission to the various stages of the formation journey. They must also accompany the drafting and implementation of the initial and continuing formation plans for the Brothers in the Provinces and Regions.
- Accompany the implementation of protocols to prevent and deal with any kind of abuse in the initial formation centres.
- Adopt and continue to define criteria for safeguarding training in continuing formation.
- Carefully select and oversee the formation of the Formators. Promote the design of regular and well-structured programmes for Formators and provide the formation teams with the necessary resources for them to perform their task of accompanying new vocations in the best possible manner.
- Continue to promote the development and strengthening of regional formation centres in the Order, building on existing formation experiences.
- Accompany the design, development and evaluation of continuing formation that strengthens the harmonious growth of the Brothers in each of their personal, spiritual, community, charismatic and ecological dimensions.

We believe it appropriate to organise refresher courses for the Brothers, some years after solemn profession, as part of their continuing formation process.

d) Renewing our Religious life by returning to the roots of the Hospitaller Consecrated Vocation

In addition to caring for the Family of St. John of God, the Brothers must care for their own vocation and that of their Brothers, always returning to the roots of Hospitaller consecration in order to be able to live their Religious life to the full. This implies addressing certain important challenges, mindful as we are of the way attitudes influenced by secularism and worldliness are entering our lives, as Pope Francis has said (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 93).

In order to overcome secularist habits and attitudes, and excessive individualism and personal commitments that take no account of community life, the General Chapter recommends that the Order and each Brother should incorporate the following into their lives:

- Fostering and deepening personal and community discernment.
- Fostering spiritual accompaniment.
- Fostering a personal and community life, lived in simplicity and joy.
- Strengthening continuing formation as a means of personal and community spiritual growth.
- Encouraging community life meetings and events, as an opportunity to enrich our fraternal and spiritual lives.

e) Care of Elderly and Infirm Brothers

In our communities, we Brothers look out for each other. Our older Brothers deserve special care. Our fraternal community "cares for and loves our sick and elderly brothers who, with their experience, sacrifice and prayer, are fruitful members of both the Church and the Order" (Const. 37b).

We consider that our care of our older Brothers always depends on and requires a local solution, according to the cultural and provincial circumstances.

We recommend that, as far as possible, older Brothers should be able to remain in their usual communities. However, small communities quickly reach their limits in the matter of providing care. When it is no longer possible to provide care in a Brother's own community, other solutions must be considered. At all events, we must always maintain contact with and care for our sick and elderly Brothers. The General Statutes also place this obligation on us. (cf. GS 42).

It is important to create a community in which the Brothers can feel safe and loved. We must also support our Brothers, as far as possible, to make them enjoy this stage of their lives pursuing their hobbies, and other interests that bring them meaning and joy.

In addition to mental preparation, the elderly Brothers also need to be financially prepared. We recommend that the necessary financial reserves be built up to provide for the Brothers' retirement, or that insurance be taken out for them, according to the norms of each Province or Region.

We have identified the following needs of our older Brothers:

- Medical care
- Social interactions and companionship.
- A religious, age-appropriate environment according to their state of health.
- Psychological support including recognising and appreciating the wisdom that comes with age.

We recommend each Province to safeguard their assets, their last will and testament, and provide adequate assistance in the final stage of the Brothers' lives, by preparing all the necessary legal documents, in accordance with the laws and customs of each country.

We believe that growing old within the Order should be an important topic in our formation. We prepare ourselves for the final stage of our lives by supporting and caring for one another and by honouring the gift of ageing and the wisdom that comes from a life lived in hospitality.

4. Conclusion

The General Chapter has been a synodal meeting of the Hospitaller Family of St. John of God, which began with the preparatory phase. Its purpose was to set us on our way, listening to one another in order to discern what the Lord is asking of our Order, to enable us to remain faithful to the charism and mission of Hospitality, in the spirit of Saint John of God, our Founder.

These Declarations reflect the outcome of this synodal journey and this discernment process. We believe that Our Lord is calling us to work on the topics indicated in the coming years. Applying them at the personal, local, provincial and general levels will demand further study and concrete implementation at each level and in each situation. We believe that the General Chapter's synodal journey must continue into the future as a commitment by the whole Order to develop and harvest forth all the fruits contained in these Declarations.

General Statutes: Amendments to Articles 120 and 124

Amendment to No 120 of the General Statutes on the number of Chapter participants, also indicated in Article 85 of the Constitutions.

Reason: the idea arose from the imbalance between the number of Brothers in the Provinces and their representation at the General Chapters.

Previous wording

120. In the General Chapter besides the members by right indicated in article 85 of the Constitutions the following participate:

- two vocals for each Province;
- one vocal for each Vice-Province;
- an additional vocal for each 60 professed Brothers in the Provinces and Vice-Provinces; a vocal for each General Delegation;
- one Co-worker invited from each Province, Vice-Province and General Delegation, attending in a consultative capacity in the sessions established by the General Definitory.

Amended wording

120. In the General Chapter besides the members by right indicated in article 85 of the Constitutions the following participate:

- **one vocal for each Province with fewer than 25 professed Brothers;**
- **two vocals for each Province with more than 25 professed Brothers;**
- one vocal for each Vice-Province
- an additional vocal for each 60 professed Brothers in the Province or Vice-Province;
- one vocal for each General Delegation;
- one Co-worker invited from each Province, Vice-Province and General Delegation, attending in a consultative capacity in the sessions established by the General Definitory.

Amendment to 124 § d of the General Statutes concerning the responsibilities of the General Definitory for non-canonical appointments to the Provincial Definitory.

Reason: some appointments made by the Provincial Definitory for which removal, transfer or resignation are not required to be submitted to the General Definitory for approval. The approval of the Provincial Definitory is sufficient.

Previous wording

124 § d. It is the responsibility of the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, to remove, to transfer or to accept the resignation of any position or office of the Order, conferred by the Chapters or General or Provincial Definitories.

Amended wording

124 § d It is the responsibility of the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, to remove, to transfer or to accept the resignation of any position or office of the Order, conferred by the **Chapters or the General Definitory**.

**HOSPITALER ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD
PROGRAMME FOR THE SEXENNIIUM 2024 - 2030**

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF ANIMATION

REGION	ANIMATOR
Europe Region	(Bavarian, Austrian, Polish and Western Europe Provinces): Brother Saji Mullankuzhy (Rome, Lombardy-Veneto, French, Spanish, Portuguese Provinces): Brother Joaquim Erra
Africa Region	Brother Etienne Sène
America Region	Brothers David Lynch and Ruben Daniel González
Asia-Pacific Region	Brother John Jung

AREAS OF ANIMATION AND GOVERNANCE

AREAS OF ANIMATION AND GOVERNANCE	ANIMATOR
Life of the Brothers:	Brothers Pascal Ahodegnon and Etienne Sène
Vocations Promotion and Formation	Brothers Etienne Sène and Dairon Meneses
Animation of the General Curia Communities	Brother Dairon Meneses
Charismatic Management, Bursary, Cultural and Artistic Heritage, Statistics and Administration	Brother Joaquim Erra, Mr Ansgar Dieckhoff and Ms Monica Cicconi
Transmission of the Charism	Ms Inmaculada Roig and Brother Joaquim Erra.
Bioethics	Brother Joaquim Erra and Mr Jürgen Wallner
Safe Spaces and Care of the Planet	Brothers Saji Mullankuzhy and Dairon Meneses
Health and Social Pastoral Care	Brother Rubén Daniel González and Ms Susana Queiroga
Emerging Realities	Brother David Lynch and Mr Paul Bott
Postulator General	Brother Dario Vermi
Missions and International Cooperation	Ms Katia Morello, Brother John Jung and Brother Etienne Sène
Communications and General Curia Website	Brothers Joaquim Erra and Dairon Meneses.
Procurator General	Brother Dairon Meneses
Secretary General	Brother Dairon Meneses.

ASSEMBLIES OF MAJOR SUPERIORS

YEAR	DAYS
2025	October 13 - 17
2026	October 19 - 23
2027	October 18 - 22
2028	October 23 - 27
2029	October 15 - 19

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

YEAR	MONTHS
2029	July to November

GENERAL CHAPTER

YEAR	DATE
2030	14 October to 6 November

COURSE IN PREPARATION FOR SOLEMN PROFESSION

YEAR	MONTH
2026	September
2028	September

GENERAL DEFINITORIES

YEAR	MONTH-DAYS	YEAR	MONTH-DAYS
2025	March: 17 – 22 July: 21 – 26 October: 06 – 11	2026	January: 08 – 13 April: 13 – 18 July: 13 – 18 October: 12 – 17
2027	January: 11 – 16 April: 12 – 17 July: 05 – 10 October: 11 – 16	2028	January: 10 – 15 April: 26 – 29 July: 03 – 08 October: 06 – 21
2029	January: 08 – 13 April: 16 – 21 July: 09 – 14 October: 08 – 13	2030	January: 07 – 12 April: 08 – 14 July: 15 – 20

PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

2026

PROVINCE	DATE
Austria/ Bavaria	January 19 - 25
Lombardy-Veneto	January 26 – 31
Rome	February 02 - 08
Portugal	February 09 - 15
Spain	February 16 - 22

France	February	23 – 28
Western Europe	March	02 - 08
Poland	March	09 – 15
India	March	16 – 22
Viet Nam	March	23 – 29
Oceania	April	(30.03) - 02
Korea	April	07 – 12
Africa Saint Augustine	April	20 – 26
Africa Saint Richard Pampuri	May	(27.04) - 03
Good Shepherd-United States	May	11 – 17
Latin America and the Caribbean	May	18 - 24

PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS 2030

15 January to 31 March 2030

CANONICAL VISITATIONS

2025
Polish Province (Nazareth): 11.05 - 11.07. Closure: 14-18.07 Brother Saji Mullankuzhy
French Province (Madagascar): 02.06 - 04.07. Closure 07-11.07 Brother Joaquim Erra and Brother Etienne Sene
Rome Province (Philippine Provincial Delegation): 03.11 - 01.12. Closure 04-05.12 Brother Joaquim Erra.
2026
Korean Province (China and Japan) 01 - 25.09 Brother John Jung
2027
Western European Province: 01.03 - 07.04. Closure 08-09.04 Brother Saji Mullankuzhy and Brother John Jung
Oceania Province: 19-25.04 Brother Pascal Ahodegnon and Brother John Jung
Lombardy-Veneto Province: 01.05 – 02.06. Closure 3-4.06 Brother Joaquim Erra

African Province of St Augustine: 07.06 - 28.08. Closure 4-7.10 Brother Etienne Sène and Brother David Lynch
African Province of St. Richard Pampuri: 01.09 - 28.09. Closure 29.09 - 01.10 Brother Etienne Sène
2028
Spanish Province: 17.01 – 03.03 Brother Pascal Ahodegnon, Brother Joaquim Erra and Brother Saji Mullankuzhy
General Curia: 24-25.04 Brother Pascal Ahodegnon
Viet Nam Province: 22.05 – 23-06. Closure 26-30.06 Brother John Jung and Brother David Lynch
Indian Province: 01.09 – 01.10. Closure 4-6.10 Brother John Jung and Brother Etienne Sène
Vatican Pharmacy Community: 28-30.10 Brother Pascal Ahodegnon
2029
Provincia Austriaca-Bavarese: 15.01 – 7.04. Closure 9-13.04 Brother Etienne Sène and Brother Saji Mullankuzhy
Latin American and the Caribbean Province: 15.01 – 6.04 Brother Pascal Ahodegnon, Brother Joaquim Erra and Brother David Lynch
Portuguese Province: 30.04 - 25.05. Closure 28-30.05 Brother Joaquim Erra
Good Shepherd-United States Province: 28.05 – 24.06. Closure 25-29.06 Brother David Lynch

GENERAL CURIA

PRIOR GENERAL OF THE HOSPITALER ORDER OF ST. JOHN OF GOD

Br. Pascal AHODEGNON



Born at Savé (Zou - Benin), 10th April 1971. Temporary profession 15th August 1997 and solemn profession 25th May 2003. Elected 4th Councillor General from 2012 at the General Chapter held in Fatima, Portugal. Elected 2nd Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy. Elected Superior General on 1st November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feast day: 17th May

GENERAL COUNCILLORS

1st Br. Joaquim ERRAS MAS



Born at Vic (Barcelona - Spain), 3rd June 1961. Temporary profession 29th September 1984 and solemn profession 23rd September 1989. Provincial of the Aragon Province from 2001 to 2007. Elected 1st Councillor General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy. Elected 1st Councillor General on 4th November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feastday: 26th July

2nd Br. Saji MULLANKUZHAY, priest



Born at Alakode, (Kannur, Kerala - India), 8th May 1978. Temporary profession 8th December 2002 and solemn profession 23rd November 2008. Ordained priest 1st May 2019. Provincial of the Austrian Province from 2018. Elected 2nd Councillor General on 4th November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feastday: 3rd July

3rd Br. Etienne Mbad SENE



Born at Peleo-Serere (Thiès, Senegal), 11th August 1974. Temporary profession 15 August 2000 and solemn profession 8th September 2006. Elected 3rd Councillor General on 4th November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feastday: 26th December

4th Br. David LYNCH



Born at Derry (Northern Ireland), 21st July 1954. Temporary profession 7th September 1981 and solemn profession 8th September 1985. Provincial of the Good Shepherd in North America Province from 2022. Elected 4th Councillor General on 4th November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feastday: 29th December

5th Br. Yoan JUNG, priest



Born at Pukku Puk Dong (Republic of Korea), 5th September 1968. Temporary profession 12th December 1994 and solemn profession 1st May 2001. Ordained priest 18th November 2008. Provincial of the Korean Province from 2022. Elected 5th General Councillor on 4th November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feastday: 27th December

OTHER OFFICES

BURSAR GENERAL

Br. Joaquim ERRA MAS



Appointed Bursar General on 6 November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

PROCURATOR AND SECRETARY GENERAL

Br. Dairon Orley MENESES CARO, priest



Born at Sopetran (Antioquia - Colombia), 7th May 1972. Temporary profession 8th December 2006 and solemn profession 8th December 2011. Ordained priest 26th October 2014. Elected Councillor

General on 29th January 2019 at the General Chapter held in Rome, Italy. Appointed Secretary General on 6 November 2024 at the General Chapter held in Częstochowa, Poland.

Feastday: 7th May

POSTULATOR GENERAL

Br. Dario VERMI, priest



Born at Rovato (Brescia - Italy) 18th March 1963. Temporary profession 24th August 1986 and solemn profession 4th September 1994. Ordained priest 5th April 1997. Prior of Strmac (Croatia) in 2011 and of Venezia from 2014 to 2018 and Prior of Brescia from 2018 to 2019. Appointed as General Postulator on 18th March 2019 for sexennium 2019-2024. Re-appointed on 10th January 2025 for the six-year period 2024-2030.

Feastday 19th December

1

The Black Madonna of Czechochowa in Poland:

he symbol of the venue of the 70th General Chapter, where Brother Pascal Ahodegnon was elected Superior General, depicting the Virgin Mary, special Patron Saint of the Order. It was under her auspices that the new government began life, and with her protection she is watching over the whole Family of Saint John of God throughout the world.

5

The sword, heart and rays of light:

The sword and the heart symbolise St John of God's motto 'the heart commands'. The rays of light symbolise the 54 countries where the Order is currently deploying its mission.

4

The people around the pomegranate:

these represent the whole Family of Saint John of God with its many faces, while also referring to a fundamental concept for the Church today: synodality.

2

Motto "GENEROUS IN CHARITY":

This is the motto chosen by the Superior General. Let charity be practised with love, compassion and humanity for the needs of the world.

3

The pomegranate:

The symbol of the Hospitaller Order and its Founder St John of God, who began his work in Granada, Spain (Granada is the Spanish word for pomegranate).

