



SM bulletin

Friday, 30 September 2016

ARC 2016

The first days of the Annual Review Consultation were taken up with the report of Fr John Hannan on the state of the Society and with financial matters. On Friday, following input from Mrs Kath McCormack, a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, the meeting addressed the important matter of the ongoing updating in each unit of its policies and procedures for the safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults.

Work progressed in taking forward the reconfiguration processes in North America and Asia/Australia/New Zealand, the advancement of the network of City-Centre churches, as well as further mutual sharing of resources between units of the Society.

Vocations, recruitment, admission criteria and initial formation (focusing particularly on pastoral and ministry training) were important issues treated. A sub-committee formed to carry forward the question of the presence and role of our brothers within the Society of Mary gave a report, which will assist those units who are interested in bringing the matter to the general chapter. Our inter-relationship with Marist Laity was another important matter addressed, especially in the light of the coming chapter—the question being how the laity might be enabled to express their expectations of the nature and outcomes of that inter-relationship.



A summary and analysis of the responses of the recent survey was presented. The survey was intended by the GA to engage all members in reflecting on the state of the Society, its strengths and weaknesses and its potential. As well it invited nominations of key issues for the general chapter—data for the Pre-capitular Committee. (This committee will be established by the superior general once all local chapters have elected delegates to the chapter and is expected to have its first meeting in February next year.) ARC considered plans for ways to further engage the Society in preparing for the chapter, as well as offering suggestions for the Pre-capitular Committee on the style of the chapter and its processes.

Some time was also spent in the evaluation of ARC after its seven years in existence. It was agreed that as the years have gone on ARC has developed in fulfilling the desire of the chapter: to strengthen the connections between the various parts of the Society; to enhance participation, co-responsibility and agility in decision making. The present way in which the GA is structured was also looked at critically in light of the projected changes in the demographics of the Society.

After dealing with significant issues concerning the present situation of the Society and its future, ARC returned to the opening address of the superior general considering the concrete decisions that need to be made for the coming year to take the Society forward. The meeting concluded on September 28. *(Photo: the last supper.)*

FORUM NOVUM ONLINE

A new issue of *Forum Novum* has been posted on the Society's website. Among the interesting and informative articles readers will find two specifically on the Pilgrimage to Fourvière of 23 July 1816 and the Pledge made there on that day.