

# 6 - SOLIDARITY FOR THE MISSION



*For a Solidarity, yeast of humanization and of evangelization*

## *To go to the source of our solidarity*

*Our specific way to live in solidarity is rooted in the Gospel as proposed by the Church through the mediation of our Founders, inviting us to establish bonds, particularly with our Brothers and the young people. These bonds make us and those to whom we are sent more human.*

### THE WORD OF GOD

Acts 4, 32:

*"The community of believers was of one heart and one mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they held everything in common."*

Mt 23, 8-9:

*"As for you, you are all Brothers... you have but one Father in heaven."*

### THE RULE OF LIFE

C 37: *"In simplicity and joy, the Brothers willingly share what they are, what they do and what they have."*

D 46b: *"The community of goods is an essential element of religious poverty. It allows Brothers, who are aware of their close ties to all the members of the Congregation, to provide for their sick and elderly confreres, for the upkeep of the houses of formation and for communities, missions and provinces in special need."*

### Blessed Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997)

*"There is much suffering in the world. And material suffering is to be hungry, to live without a home, to have all kinds of sickness, but I believe that the greatest suffering is to be alone, to feel unloved, simply to have nobody. More and more I realized that the worst suffering a human person can have, is to be not wanted."*

## *To live out our solidarity in all its dimensions:*

**Solidarity is a practical form of fraternity.** In the Congregation, it has been lived since its origin like an essential dimension of fraternal life and as a practical way of living our vow of poverty. Solidarity implies the sharing of our goods and our talents while respecting of differences and needs.

**At institutional level**, fraternity is developed by sharing between provinces and vice-provinces, in accordance with the historical bonds binding people together, through the "missionary foundations". The mother-provinces (France, Canada, Spain primarily), in founding communities in Africa, Asia or Latin America, have invested financially but even more, agreed from the very beginning to share also their human resources by sending Brothers to these new countries. That sharing today can be done in two directions, from North towards the South, but also from the South towards the North (ex: Uganda sends Brothers to Japan and to the Philippines).

**Economic solidarity** only comes in second place, but it proves to be essential, in that many countries where we are, the salaries given from the schools do not make it possible to live decently, and even less, to develop institutions and the means of evangelization.

## *To favour solidarity that humanizes and evangelizes*

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*For that purpose, we must take into account the following points:*

- Solidarity lived in the spirit of the Gospel must contribute to reinforce the bonds that make of us Brothers as our Founders desired.
- This solidarity must help the Brothers to take a personal charge and responsibility of the life of their community and of their mission.
- Solidarity must not uproot the Brothers from their local culture.
- Solidarity must allow each administrative unit to have the capacity to meet the needs of its members and provide services in a way adapted to their environment.
- Solidarity entails that each administrative unit tries to find its proper resources to meet its needs.
- Solidarity demands also the practice of transparency by those who give as well as by those who receive.

## *Improving a culture of solidarity.*

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*Action Plan to improve the culture of solidarity,*

1. **Each province** tries to make the Brothers more sensitive to this culture of solidarity. It invites them to a responsible behavior, by submitting their solidarity projects to their superior. It informs them, in all transparency, of its financial situation in all its dimensions, of the commitments to solidarity already assumed and of the calls it has received.
2. **The Mennaisian Family**, in its educational projects, is invited to form the young people to a culture of solidarity, for example, in organizing experiments of sharing at local and even international level. This basic orientation must challenge the whole education community and contribute to make of our institutions of education, places of wholesome formation.
3. **At the level of the Congregation**, in order to develop solidarity, the Chapter recommends the creation of an **Economic Council and a Solidarity Committee** :

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**THE ECONOMIC COUNCIL**, composed of 4 or 5 members presided by the Treasurer General, with the mission:

- To participate in reflection on the organization and function of financial activities and solidarity in the congregation. To contribute to their evolution in order to respond better to the mission, taking its situation into account.
- To participate in the production of the annual budget of the Treasurer General, paying attention to certain components: dues (contributions from the sectors), management of the investments, aid granted...
- To evaluate, after study, the means the congregation has at its disposal before initiating any large-scale projects that could endanger the financial balance in the short or long term.
- To continue on the work already started for the Solidarity Fund at the level of promotion, of capitalization, management and eventually the setting up of an appropriate legal structure.
- To evaluate and ensure an adequate formation of personnel put in administrative duties in the congregation: treasurers, accountants, managers...

**THE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE**, composed of 3 or 4 members, with the mission:

- To study requests coming from the new and future missions, to find necessary funds in consultations with various administrative units in the congregation.
- To assist administrative units that try to initiate self-financing experiments. To help them to prepare projects to be submitted to international NGO's.
- To see how, with the help of agencies such as TSF, SAL, ASSIFIC, SECOURS MISSIONS, it would be possible to find new sources of financing for our institutions.

The President of the Solidarity Committee should be a member of the Economic Council.