

# **VIIIth**

## **GENERAL CHAPTER**

**SEPTEMBER 26 - OCTOBER 4, 1876**

**§§§§§**

**ACTS**

of the

**VIIIth GENERAL CHAPTER**<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> These **Minutes** are contained on 29 lined pages, that leave 1 inch margin at the top, and one and one fourth inches at the bottom. The pages are the same measurements as those used in the preceding General Chapter.

**In the Name of the Lord. Amen.** <sup>153</sup>

**Verona, September 14, 1876.**

Having seen the Decree of the Very Rev. Fr. Superior General, dated August 15, 1876, with which he convokes the General Congregation for the 26<sup>th</sup> day of this month – on the invitation of the Director, Fr. Joseph Sembianti, those members of the House of the Stimate – St. Teresa’s, who were not impeded, having active voice, were assembled in the regular Chapter, namely:

Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Director  
Fr. Charles Zara  
Fr. Joseph Marchesini  
Fr. Bellino Carrara  
Fr. James Marini  
Fr. Richard Tabarelli  
Re. Lawrence Rigatti  
Cleric, Cajetan Pizzighella – Sub-deacon  
Cleric, Melchiade Vivari, Sub-deacon  
Cleric, Julius Zanini, Sub-deacon

for the purpose of expressing what they believe opportune in the Lord, to submit to the reflection and to the deliberation of the said General Congregation:

Having invoked the divine aid, the Director, who presided over the Chapter, asked those assembled, one by one, and they responded that they did not have anything to propose.

The Chapter was then closed, and all affixed their signatures.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Director  
Fr. Charles Zara  
Fr. Joseph Marchesini  
Fr. Bellino Carrara  
Fr. James Marini  
Fr. Richard Tabarelli  
Fr. Lawrence Rigatti  
Cl. Cajetan Pizzighella, Subd.  
Cl. Melchiade Vivari, Subd.  
Cl. Julius Zanini, Subd.

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<sup>153</sup> Before the formal **General Chapter Minutes** begin, there are two sheets containing Proposals, submitted to the Chapter. The first from the ‘Mother House’ of the **Stimate**, is white, un-lined paper, measuring 8 and three fourths by 12 inches, and there is writing on both sides.

W J.M.J. <sup>154</sup>

**In the Name of the Lord. Amen.  
The 20<sup>th</sup> of September, 1876.**

With Rev. Frs. Vesentini <sup>155</sup>, Mark Bassi, Andrew Sterza, Bartholomew Perazzani, Alexis Magagna present, all assembled in the regular Chapter Room of the House of S. Bernardino Vecchio, in Trent, and they proposed to ask the General Congregation: If, notwithstanding that rule of ours that states: *serve God and the Church, entirely gratuitously*, <sup>156</sup> it might be possible to receive something, after having performed some spiritual ministry, not as a stipend, but as a simple gift, especially if the House has need of it? - This was put to a vote, four voted for Yes, and one abstained.

The same Chapter unanimously submits to the prudent consideration of the general Congregation, what follows:

The House of S. Bernardino cordially thanks the Congregation for having declared that it recognizes as its Daughter, this poor and humble House of ours, and not only recognizes it,

*...but, rather it lovingly presses to its own bosom, the Student House of the Aspirants, situated in Trent, considering it as the nursery of its young plants, its future hopes.*

We are grateful for the affectionate feelings of our Mother, the Congregation: and we will do our utmost, according to our meager ability, with the help of God, never to fail in our duty, and her hopes.

However, encouraged by this, her loving solicitude, we would wish, as it seems our duty to do so, to expose to the Congregation the real needs in which our House finds itself.

The General Congregation, the last time it met, when it came to determine the money for the annual maintenance of this House, thought that 5480 Italian Lira would suffice, with everything taken into consideration.

But, having regard for the special conditions of this city, such an amount of money for the suitable maintenance of 16 individuals [the number determined by the same Congregation], is rather lacking, as the past evidently shows; nonetheless, when the 5480 Lira indicated, have been effectively received into the account of the House of S. Bernardino, by employing all possible savings, they can keep us going somewhat. However, unfortunately, this has not happened, in that the assets of the House and

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<sup>154</sup> Then follow here the Proposals from the House in **Trent**. They are contained on plain, white paper, now quite brown with age, measuring 16 one half by 11 three-fourths inches. It was folded in such a way, as to make 4 writing sides, 8 one fourth by 11 and three fourths inches. Three sides are written on.

<sup>155</sup> In these early Chapters Dominic *Vicentini's* name is often spelled by other confreres: *Vesentini*.

<sup>156</sup> CF # 3

property of S. Bernardino, are too far distant from reaching the amount contemplated by the Congregation – It is calculated that the revenue derived from the “Maso” fund <sup>157</sup> ought to have reached 2000 Lira; in reality, however, the sum of the net income given to us up until now [including also the minute advantages], has been 650 Lira – Not even were we to accomplish marvels, the revenue would not correspond to the amount of the purchase of the property, because the needs require the payment in the purchase even of a fitting maintenance and mortgage.

Furthermore, the Congregation estimated the Stipend coming from the Celebration of Holy Masses at 2000 Lira – we point out that even with the four Priests who have been incardinated, up until now, in the House of S. Bernardino, celebrating without fail, every day, and without ever having a free Mass, the Mass revenue was 1738 Lira – From these figures, it results that the revenue from the House and property of S. Bernardino, is reduced to 2388 Lira.

Therefore, the House of S. Bernardino, to have the amount established for it, by the General Congregation, of 5480 Lira, would be lacking 1612 Lira.

This deficit cannot be overcome unless our House is to receive effectively, the amount established for it, or by lessening the established number of 16 individuals.

It should be noted that our daily expenses are governed by the most strict economy, and notwithstanding this, our House would find itself with a considerable deficit, if Divine Providence had not come to our aid, in an extraordinary manner.

Trent, S. Bernardino Vecchio

Fr. Dominic Vesentini, Director

“ Mark Bassi

“ Andrew Sterza

“ Bartholomew Perazzani

“ Alexis Magagna

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†††

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<sup>157</sup> Not identified, but noted by the translator under the preceding **General Chapter**.

**In the Year of our Lord, 1876, this Tuesday <sup>158</sup>**

**September 26**

**In the Name of the Lord. Amen**

In the Mother House of the Stimmate, in Verona, on the convocation of the Very Rev. Superior General, of all the Capitulars of our Congregation, today, the following were gathered and were assembled, at the sound of the bell, in the room of the Very Rev. Founder:

Very Rev. Superior General, Fr. Peter Vignola  
 Very Rev. John Rigoni, Gen. Councilor  
 Very Rev. Vincent Vignola, Gen. Councilor  
 Very Rev. Francis Benciolini, Gen. Councilor  
 Very Rev. Joseph Sembianti, Gen. Councilor  
 Very Rev. Mark Bassi, Graduate  
 Very Rev. Charles Zara, Graduate  
 Very Rev. Louis Morando, Graduate  
 Very Rev. Peter Beltrami, Graduate  
 Very Rev. Dominic Vesentini, Superior of the House of S. Bernardino.

Having invoked the divine assistance, with the recitation of the *Veni, Creator*, and having verified the number of those having the right to attend the General Congregation, that corresponds to the number of those present, it recognized the Congregation to be full, legitimate, and opened by putting this to a vote.

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Present  | 10 |
| Voting   | 9  |
| Majority | 5  |
| Yes      | 9  |
| No       | 0  |

THE CONGREGATION IS DECLARED FULL, LEGITIMATE AND OPENED.

△△△

According to the order established in the Constitutions, on line eight, of Chap. I, Parag. 6 of the *Appendix*, the Election of the Secretary was next, and of three members having the **Grade**, who with the Superior and the Secretary, will draw up the list of the Matters to be treated,

For this purpose, the ballots were distributed, and the following were named:

For the Office of Secretary, Rev. Fr. Joseph Sembianti received 5 votes.

For the Office of drawing up the List, as explained above:

|                               |          |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Rev. Fr. John Rigoni with     | 7 votes. |
| Rev. Fr. Mark Bassi with      | 7 votes. |
| Rev. Fr. Vincent Vignola with | 5 votes. |

△△△

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<sup>158</sup> On the original, here begin the nearly 30 pages of the **Acts of the VIIIth General Chapter.**

Before taking the matters to be formed into the List, as explained above, in consideration of the presence among those assembled, a Director, not having the **Grade**, a doubt was presented concerning the interpretation of those words that appear in the *Appendix*, Chap. I, Parag. 6, and under the sixth heading: **Moreover, all those will have the right of active voice for all those matters, etc.**, which do not seem to agree with the clear dispositions of Chap. I, Parag. 2, second line, where it clearly states that: **both these** [Directors of Houses, who do not have the **Grade**], and **the Priest Collaborators, in those matters, and only for those matters, for which they have been admitted, can have a vote, if the Congregation judges them capable, and competent of casting a vote.**

Therefore, this Proposal was formed:

Whether the Congregation intends to give to the Directors of the Houses, who do not have the **Grade**, the right of a vote, **in all matters**, except the Election of the Superior, and the active and passive Election of the General Councilors, of the Admonitor, and of the Procurator General.

A vote was taken on this Proposition:

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Present  | 10 |
| Voting   | 9  |
| Majority | 5  |
| Yes      | 3  |
| No       | 6  |

IT WAS REJECTED.

△△△

Following this, a number of Proposals were made, of which the following was retained:

To add to the words of the *Appendix*, Chap. I, Parag. 6. sixth line: **Moreover, they will have the right of active ballot for all those matters**, another word, *respectively*, **except**, etc. – so that the entire clause will read:

**Moreover, they will have the right of active ballot for all those matters respectively, except...etc..**

This is so that there be understood without equivocation, the clear disposition of Chap. I, Parag. 2, second line: **both these** [Directors of Houses, who do not have the **Grade**], **and the Priest Collaborators, in those matters, for which they have been admitted, can have a vote if the Congregation judges them capable and competent of casting a vote.**

A vote was taken on this Proposal, through Yea and Nay –

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Present  | 10 |
| Voting   | 9  |
| Majority | 5  |
| Yes      | 8  |
| No       | 1  |

IT WAS ADMITTED.

△△△

The Congregation unanimously proclaims that the moment in which It will decide matters which the Directors of the Houses, who do not have the **Grade**, may be authorized to give their vote, when the List will be definitively drawn up and discussed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Matters for the List were assembled.

**I. Superior General**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. To examine, whether for the erection of a new House, there is necessary the convocation of a General Congregation.              | ( | This will be the first matter to be treated. |
| 2. If the project of the foundation of a House of the Congregation is to be accepted.  | ) |  |
|  | ( |  |
| 3. How should the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Rule of Chap. I, Section I, Part 7, be explained.  | ) | These will be                                |
|  | ( | treated                                      |
|  | ) |  |
| 4. How should n. 1, of Chap. III, of Part III be explained.  | ( | in their order,                              |
|  | ) |  |
|  | ( | after the                                    |
| 5. If it seems inconvenient that the Gen. Councilors be in places distant from the Superior.                                       | ) |  |
|  | ( | First  |
|  | ) |  |
| 6. An examination of the project of the civil organization of the Congregation, to withdraw from the recent Ministerial Circulars. | ( |  |
|  | ) | Proposal                                     |
|  | ( |  |
| 7. Proposal of the Nomination of the Examiners of the I and II Scrutinies.   | ) |  |
|  | ( |  |

**II. Houses**

**House of the Stimmate**

Proposes nothing.

**House of the Dereletti**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. If it is fitting to accept the benevolent disposition of the Rev. Fr. Anthony Guardelli, in favor of the Congregation of the Stimmate. | This will be treated with the other points of temporal matters, i.e., in n. 7. |
|---|--|



2. If it is agreeable to try to sell the House of the Ssma. *Trinità*. N. 7
3. That the personnel of the House of the *Dereletti* be increased. This will be treated in its place.

### **House of S. Bernardino Vecchio**

1. If, notwithstanding that Rule of ours, which states: *Serve God and the Church entirely gratuitously*<sup>159</sup>, it might be possible, after performing some spiritual ministry, to receive something, not as a Stipend, but as a simple gift. This will be treated after the preceding Proposal.
2. Asks that the Congregation might increase the fixed allotment for the House. This will be treated when the question of Fr. Rigoni is discussed, in n. 7.

### **House of Parma**

Has nothing to propose.

### **III. Councilors**

Councilor, **Fr. Benciolini**

1. That it might be provided that the House of the *Dereletti* will not have to send a Priest to celebrate for the Canossian Sisters. This will be treated in its order.
2. If it would be proper that Fr. Benciolini convey his holdings, to one or several during life. This will be treated together with N. 7.
3. If it is agreeable to accept collaboration in the *Echo of St. Joseph*. This will be treated after the first question of the same.

Councilor, **Fr. Joseph Sembianti**

1. To what point has the Plan of Studies, which was decreed in the last General Congregation, been conducted, or has it been executed. This will be treated at the same time as question N. 4, of Fr. Rigoni; see below.

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<sup>159</sup> CF # 3.

2. What has been done to return Fr. Marchesini to religious observance, a matter that the last General Congregation entrusted to the zeal and prudence of the Very Rev. Superior. This will be treated together with Nos. 6, 7; See below.

Councilor, **Fr. Rigoni**

1. Asks for information on Fr. Lanaro. )  
(
2. On the four who received Diplomas. ) These will  
( be treated in  
( their chronological  
( order.
3. If a certain age is required for the Clerics to be admitted into the Priesthood. )
4. He refers to the **Minutes of the Seventh General Congregation**, regarding the trust Committed by the Congregation, to the Superior for the Propaganda. ( This is to be cited with n. 1 of Fr. Sembianti
5. He proposes to make a second, and last Appeal, against the **Decree of the Vth General Congregation**, which gives the faculty to the Superior to grant the administration of one's own goods to a member. This will be treated in its place.
6. The same, then, as Procurator General, asks: that the dispositions of the Constitutions, **Appendix**, Chap. II, Parag. 3, n. 21, be carried out. (Together with these Proposals, Nos. 6, 7, )  
(here will be treated here Nos. 1, 2, of )  
(House of S. Bernardino; No. 2, of Counc. )
7. He asks if this same disposition is applicable also in the case of Fr. Marchesini, and, then in the Holdings to be restored. (Fr. Benciolini; and No. 2, of Counc., Fr. )  
) Sembianti.
8. He renews the question of last year, and Which is already placed in the **Minutes of The VIIth Congregation**, 29<sup>th</sup> day of October, n. 12. This will be treated at the end.

**Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.**

**Fr. John Rigoni**

**Fr. Vincent Vignola**

**Fr. Mark Bassi**

**Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Secretary of the Congregation.**

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Then, began the treatment of the matters, according to the List, but first the Congregation will pronounce itself, declaring on what points of the List, it intends to grant the right of Vote to the Director of the House of s. Bernardino Vecchio, Fr. Dominic Vicentini, who is not a **Graduate Father**.

This was put to a vote, and on the individual numbers of the List, he was approved to vote for **Nos. I: 5, 6, 7; No. II: 1, 2, 3 of the House of the Dereletti ;** as well as **Nos. 1, 2 of the House of S. Bernardino.** Furthermore, **No. III: 2, of the Councilor, Fr. Benciolini;** and **Nos. 6, 7 of the Councilor, and Procurator General, Fr. Rigoni.**

Then, there was the reading of the 1<sup>st</sup> Proposal, which is:  
 To examine, whether for the Erection of a new House, there is necessary the convocation of the General Congregation.

The Proponent presented his development of this, and those Congregated discussed it, after which the following Proposal was made:

**Speaking absolutely, for the foundation of a new House, the convocation of the General Congregation, is not to be sought, except in the case that the General Councilors might judge it necessary to convoke one.**

A vote was taken on this Proposal:

|          |                              |
|----------|------------------------------|
| Present  | 10                           |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained]. |
| Majority | 5                            |
| Yes      | 9                            |
| No       | 0                            |

IT WAS ADMITTED.

△△△

Then, these present **Minutes** were read, which contain the business of this First session, and all those present signed their names.

- Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.
- Fr. John Rigoni
- Fr. Vincent Vignola
- Fr. Francis Benciolini
- Fr. Mark Bassi
- Fr. Charles Zara
- Fr. Louis Morando
- Fr. Peter Beltrami
- Fr. Dominic Vicentini

The Meeting will be resumed tomorrow.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti Secretary  
of the Congregation

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**28<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1876, Thursday**  
**IIIrd Session**

The Members were gathered at the customary sound of the bell, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the Proposals of the Rev. Superior General was taken up, which is this:

How should the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rule of Chap. I, Section I, Part VII <sup>161</sup> be explained:

*In our Churches, there shall not be had funerals, nor funeral services, nor chaplaincies, nor anniversaries, nor anything of this kind.*

The matter was discussed by those Congregated, and the following Proposal was formed:

Whether the Congregation ought to take up the matter of an authentic interpretation of this Rule, that might serve as a Norm; or, whether the Congregation should make provisions that might arise in various cases.

This was put to a vote:

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 10                          |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 5                           |
| Yes      | 0                           |
| No       |                             |

IT WAS ADMITTED THAT THE CONGREGATION OUGHT TO TAKE UP THE  
MATTER OF AN AUTHENTIC INTERPRETATION.

Then followed a discussion on the manner of procedure that should be followed to arrive at this authentic declaration, and this Proposition was adopted to be voted upon:

That there be elected three Definitors, who, within the coming month of October, will submit to the Superior, their opinion in writing, who for the solution of the cases in the meantime, from the coming month of November, until a new Congregation, will rule according to the majority of their views, until the resolutions of the Definitors have been presented to the new Congregation, and have either been accepted, or rejected by it.

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 10                          |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 5                           |
| Yes      | 7                           |
| No       | 2                           |

IT WAS ADMITTED.

As the Proposition above was admitted, the Congregation went on to name, by plurality vote, the three Definitors.

The ballots were distributed, and then collected, and the following were found to be nominated, as Definitors:

<sup>161</sup> C.D.B., Part VII, Section I, c. I, n. 3 = CF # 92.

|     |                          |               |
|-----|--------------------------|---------------|
| The | Rev. Fr. Louis Morando   | with 6 votes. |
|     | Rev. Fr. Vincent Vignola | with 5 votes. |
|     | Rev. Fr. Charles Zara    | with 5 votes. |

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Then, the 4<sup>th</sup> Proposal was brought up:  
How should # 1, of Chap. III, Part III <sup>162</sup> be explained:

***All the Clerics, and also Lay Brothers, who have good voices, will learn ecclesiastical music, but not figured chant. However, the Deacons and Priests will abstain altogether from such study, so that they might be the more committed to the deepening of their knowledge, and the exercise of the ministry of preaching.***

The words of the Rule were examined in common, and it was proposed to each one to give his opinion in writing, and the result was that the majority interprets it as containing an obligation for the Clerics, up until they become Deacons, and for the Lay Brothers, who have ability, to learn plain, or ecclesiastical chant, and that there is a prohibition for all to study that chant called *figured*.

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Following this decisive opinion, the Superior asks the Congregation:

If, by this Rule, there is prohibited in our Churches also the use of that Chant that is called *figurato*.

This was put to a vote:

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 10                          |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 5                           |
| Yes      | 1                           |
| No       | 8                           |

THE USE OF CHANT, THAT IS CALLED ***figurato*** IS NOT PROHIBITED IN OUR CHURCHES.

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The 5<sup>th</sup> Proposal of the rev. Superior was taken up:

If there is any inconvenience in finding the General Councilors in places distant from the Superior.

The Proposal was discussed, and the following Proposition was made:

Whether it seems certainly much more convenient for the General Councilors, to be near the Superior, even while the circumstances remain in which our Congregation finds itself, when at least two of the Councilors were at the side of the Superior [in accord with what is prescribed in the ***Appendix***, Chap. I, Parag. 5, # 1, towards the end], while the two other Councilors were in places that were distant.

This was put to a vote:

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<sup>162</sup> C.D.B., P. III, c. 3, n. 1 = CF # 45.



**29<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1876, Friday**  
**IVth Session**

Also today, the Members assembled at the sound of the bell, in the usual place, to proceed with the discussion of the Proposals, contained on the List.

The 6<sup>th</sup> of the Proposals of the Rev. Superior was presented.

The examination of the project of civil organization, to withdraw the Ministerial Circulars <sup>163</sup>.

The Proposal was taken under consideration, and it was unanimously adopted to undertake seriously the compilation of a Civil Statute of organization: it being clearly understood that from now on, the principal and holdings are interchangeable, that such a statute, or Plan, or any Regulation, which effectively is to establish, to retain for the end intended, in any form, even the most elaborate, should be expressed, however strengthened by verbal deliberations and individual and collective clauses, will not have [as it is also obvious that this is to be seen, and retained] any effect, other than juridical and civil; and therefore, will never be able to derogate, or to alter the Statutes of the Religious Congregation, the obligations and conscience of its Members; but it will be retained in the conscience of each one, and of all, as though it has not taken place.

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Having then passed to discuss the manner to be maintained, to draw up and to establish such a Plan, or regulation, there was unanimously adopted the Proposition expressed by Fr. Rigoni, that if he, Fr. Rigoni, is to be chosen for this project, there be given to him two associates, who may assist him in the compilation of this said Plan, i.e., there is to be submitted to the revision of the illustrious Advocate, Brasca, or, if he is not available, to some other Barrister of confidence; and that it will be adopted by the entire Congregation, when it has obtained approbation by majority vote of a special Congregation, formed by the Rev. Superior, with his full Council, and the **Graduate Fathers** present in that place.

As Assistants, there were assigned to Fr. Rigoni, also on his request, the Fr. Superior and Fr. Sembianti.

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After dinner, the Session was continued, and there were present those members who took part in the preceding Session, except for Fr. Rigoni, who, for reasons of health, was absent – all the rest consented to this part of today's Sessions.

The Congregation then went on to the 7<sup>th</sup> Proposal of the Rev. Superior, with which he asks for the Examiners of the Ist and IInd Scrutiny.

Since, in the course of the year, there were changes in personnel of the Examiners, of both the Ist and IInd Scrutinies who were elected in the **VIIth General Congregation**, and that as appears in its **Minutes**, they were supposed to remain in Office until October 6, 1877, it was found necessary to name three examiners for the Ist

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<sup>163</sup> The translator finds this text, among others, rather difficult to render. It seems that the question here was whether or not the Congregation ought to *incorporate* in some legal manner.



Scrutiny, and three for the IInd Scrutiny, who will also remain in Office until the date indicated, October 6, 1877.

When the ballots had been distributed, the following were elected for the Ist Scrutiny:

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Fr. Pio Gurisatti                                       | with 9 votes. |
| Fr. Peter Beltrami, Councilor of the House of Novitiate | with 7 votes. |
| Fr. Richard Tabarelli                                   | with 7 votes. |

These three new examiners, together with the Examiner, and the Councilor of the House of Novitiate, Fr. James Marini, already elected to this Office on August 5, 1874, will make up the number of the Examiners, prescribed in the Decree of the S. Congregation, *Regulari Discipinae*.

Then, the ballots were distributed for the Nomination of the three other General Examiners for the IInd Scrutiny, and the following were elected:

|                                     |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Fr. Charles Zara                    | with 8 votes. |
| Fr. Francis Benciolini, Gen. Counc. | with 7 votes. |
| Fr. Vincent Vignola, Gen. Counc.    | With 7 votes. |

△△△

Proceeding then to the Proposals of the single Houses, according to their disposition of the List, there came under discussion request # 3 of the House of the *Dereletti*.

That the personnel of the House be increased.

Having heard the request, the Congregation unanimously left the matter to the zeal and to the prudence of the Rev. Superior.

Then, Proposal # 1 of the House of S. Bernardino Vecchio was taken up: Whether, notwithstanding that Rule of ours, that states: *Serve God and the Church entirely gratuitously*<sup>164</sup>, it might be possible, after having rendered some spiritual ministry to receive something, not as a Stipend, but as a simple gift.

When the Proposal was developed and discussed, it was agreed unanimously that according to the Rule cited, there cannot be received, even as a gift, any sum whatsoever, for the rendering of our sacred ministry: but, that there remains firm the disposition in our Constitutions, *Appendix*, Chap. II, Parag. 3, n. 15, where it states; **having taken into consideration, the persons, times and other circumstances [which pertains to the Superior], this might be dispensed for a particular individual, and for some case, not however for all cases, not generally, or by way of Statute**, and also the other provision in the **Constitutions** themselves, in the same *Appendix*, Chapter and Parag. cited above, n. 29.

△△△

At the end of the Session, Rev. Fr. Rigoni came in, and he was present, together with the others for the reading of the Minutes, which then, all will sign.

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<sup>164</sup> CF # 3.







**2<sup>nd</sup> day of October, 1876, Monday**

**VIIth Session**

Also on this day, all the members having a voice, were assembled, except Fr. Morando, who is still absent; the 3<sup>rd</sup> Proposal of Fr. Rigoni was heard again, and the interrupted discussion of last evening went on.

Having heard the various individuals on the meaning of the Rule, **Part V, Chap. I, nn. 2, 3**<sup>166</sup>, the following response was established: It is to be retained that the age required to promote Clerics to the Priesthood, is **twenty-five and up**.

Here, the Superior intervened, and asked whether the Congregation would pronounce itself, if it believed that when the Clerics reached the age of twenty-five, whether it would be necessary, in order to promote them to the Priesthood, that he have the consultative vote of his Council, or not.

This was put to a vote.

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 9                           |
| Voting   | 8 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 5                           |
| Yes      | 1                           |
| No       | 7                           |

THUS, IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT THE SUPERIOR, IN PROMOTING THE CLERICS TO THE PRIESTHOOD, SHOULD HAVE THE CONSULTATIVE VOTE OF HIS COUNCIL.

Then, the 1<sup>st</sup> Proposal of the Counc., Fr. Sembianti, was taken up.

To what point has it been conducted, or rather, whether the Program of Studies has been drawn up, which had been declared in the last Congregation. To this Proposal was joined N. 4 of the Counc., Fr. Rigoni, which will be spoken of immediately following.

The Report that Fr. Rigoni was able to give, was heard, but it was found that nothing could be resolved, but it was necessary to wait for the arrival of Fr. Morando, who had the greatest part in this: and there was adopted instead, to hear in this matter also Fr. Tabarelli, who for this purpose, will be called in at that point, to the Congregation.

Therefore, the 4<sup>th</sup> Proposal of the Counc., Fr. Rigoni, was taken up:

He referred to the **Minutes of the VIIth Congregation**, regarding the responsibility entrusted by the Congregation, to the Superior for the Propaganda.

The **Minutes of Session III, # 2, of October 28, 1875, of the VIIth Congregation**, were read, and the Rev. Superior stated that he had kept in mind the recommendations entrusted to him in that Session: and that he had not failed to provide,

<sup>166</sup> C.D.B., P. V, c. 1, ## 2 & 3 – CF ## 70 & 71.

in so far as the circumstances permitted him to do so, and he made known that he was still hoping to put into act the Project of the **Mission in Sweden**, and he promised to continue these preparations, adding that he would remain in harmony with the S. Congregation of the Propaganda.

---

Then, Fr. Louis Morando arrived, and came into the Meeting, and there was resumed and taken up again, with Fr. Richard Tabarelli also present, who was called in for this purpose, the discussion pertaining to question N. 1 of the Council, Fr. Sembianti, on the Plan of Studies, and this conclusion was reached <sup>167</sup>:

That having seen how, because of circumstances, independent of their will, and especially because they were not able to be together, the three Definitors were unable to fulfill their duty, in the space of time allotted to them:

Considering that these same circumstances remain even now, because of which there could not be demanded, nor hope for, that they begin anew:

A Plan was adopted, that arose in the Congregation, and which is this, to establish a Sub-Commission of three members, residing at the Stimmate, and unanimously, the choice fell on the Rev. Fr. Rigoni, Rev. Fr. Zara and Rev. Fr. Tabarelli. It will be the responsibility of the first named, to call together his two collaborators, confer with them, draw up the Plan, and develop it; then, submitting first his outline to the other two Definitors, who will then add their own deductions, or views, and they will then return the entire document to the sender, who, with his associates, will bear the responsibility of it, until the entire matter will be terminated, having accompanied their work with a Report of the Sub-Commission, that will obtain the final approval of all three Definitors.

---

Then, the 5<sup>th</sup> Proposal of the Council, Fr. Rigoni was taken up:

He proposes to make a second, last Appeal, against the **Decree of the Vth Congregation**, which gives the faculty to the Superior to grant the administration of their own goods to the members.

This was put off until tomorrow.

△△△

These present Minutes were read, and the Members signed them.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.

Fr. John Rigoni

Fr. Vincent Vignola

Fr. Francis Benciolini

Fr. Mark Bassi

Fr. Charles Zara

Fr. Louis Morando

Fr. Peter Beltrami

Fr. Dominic Vicentini

Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Sec. of the Congr.

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<sup>167</sup> With the arrival of Fr. Morando, and also the appearance of Fr. Tabarelli at the same time, at this strategic moment, this might indicate the beginning of the afternoon session was right here.

**3<sup>rd</sup> day of October, 1876, Tuesday**

**VIIIth Session**

Also today the Members were assembled, and there was read again the 5<sup>th</sup> Proposal of the Counc., Fr. Rigoni, which was mentioned in yesterday's Session, and put off until today.

The Proposition reads whether the Congregation ought to concern itself with this, or not.

A vote was taken.

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 10                          |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 5                           |
| Yes      | 4                           |
| No       | 5                           |

THE CONGREGATION WILL NOT TAKE THIS MATTER UP.

Then, came the Proposals contained in the List, under N. 6, 7, of Fr. Rigoni, that is: the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of the same Fr. Rigoni, as Procurator general; the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the Counc., Fr. Sembianti, as pertaining to the 7<sup>th</sup>: the last part of the 7<sup>th</sup>, namely, concerning the Capital to be restored, which has a bearing on, and will be discussed with the Proposals of the Counc., Fr. Benciolini, on the transferral of his estates, on the offer of the Rev. Fr. Guatalli, on the Project of the sale of the building of the Most Holy *Trinità*, and finally, the proposal, or the request, of the House of S. Bernardino, contained in the **Minutes of September 20, 1876.**

There was a reading of the Rule, referred to by the Proponent, Fr. Rigoni, under N. 6 of the List, i.e., the one found in the *Appendix*, Chap. II, Parag. 3, n. 21. The Very Rev. Superior considered the request reasonable, and declared that for his part, that he would do all that he could, that the cited Rule be carried out, in so far as this will be possible.

Then came the 7<sup>th</sup> Proposal of the same:

He asks if this same discussion is applicable also in the case of Fr. Marchesini.

Before giving a decisive response to this request, a discussion arose on the other Proposal, pertaining to the same subject, and was placed under N. 2, of the Counc., Fr. Sembianti, who asks:

What has been done to return Fr. Marchesini to religious observance, as appears in the last General Congregation, the **VIIth**, as having been entrusted to the prudence of the Very Rev. Superior.

The Congregation was informed on the position in which Fr. Marchesini finds himself, the need, or rather, the duty was unanimously recognized of adopting an efficacious and resolved means to return the said Fr. Marchesini, to the exact observance of a Religious. And here, it was proposed:

That the Very Rev. Superior call Fr. Marchesini back to the House of the Stimmate, where he will then have his true and constant residence, except for now, he will go to the Pozza estate, on Saturday evenings, or the evenings of the Vigils of other Feasts, to return then, on Monday mornings, or the mornings after the Holy Days, and also except for some other brief excursions, because of the needs of unforeseen circumstances: however, every time, as everyone else, he will be accompanied by a Companion.

Furthermore, the Rev. Fr. Superior, in the name, and with the responsibility of the Gen. Congregation, will order Fr. Marchesini to entrust the administration of his estate to another, within this year, so that this Administrator will begin to function before January 1877: or, if he chooses rather to rent them out, this will have its beginning on November 11, 1877. Then, if Fr. Marchesini should refuse the disposition of the Congregation, this will no longer consider him as a Confrere.

A Vote was taken on this Proposal:

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 10                          |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 5                           |
| Yes      | 9                           |
| No       | 0                           |

IT WAS PASSED.

It responded then to the question of the Council, Fr. Rigoni, included on the preceding pages, and that appears in the List as N. 6, in response to the Rule in the *Appendix*, Chap. II, Parag. 3, n. 21.

When the matter was discussed, due Proposals were formulated:

1<sup>st</sup> Proposition: In general, is it understood that the said rule is applicable to analogous cases? Namely, the individuals who possess, administer their own goods, or have them administered, are they bound to present their annual accounts to the Superior, so that he might give them to the procurator General?

The Congregation responds that they are not bound to present their annual accounts to the Superior, so that he might give them to the Procurator Gen., because those members, who in possessing holdings, and having them administered by a third party, outside the Congregation, have already assigned their revenues, to one of their choice, so that such a conveyance might be lasting.

This was put to a vote, the result of which was:

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Present  | 10 |
| Voting   | 10 |
| Majority | 6  |



|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | 10 |
| No  | 0  |

IT WAS ADMITTED.

---

2<sup>nd</sup> Proposition.

Does this apply to Fr. Marchesini?

The Congregation responds analogously to its deliberation above, i.e., in conformity to the response given to the First Proposition, that: If Fr. Marchesini, after having adopted one of the two alternatives, i.e., after having chosen an outside Administrator of his goods, and have having found a Manager of these same goods, will permanently assign the annual revenues to other purposes, extraneous to the Congregation, he will not be obliged to the observance of the rule under discussion, which means, he would not have to present his annual accounts, so that they would be passed on to the Procurator Gen., 'to be examined and referred.'

This was put to a vote, the result of which was:

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Present  | 10 |
| Voting   | 10 |
| Majority | 6  |
| Yes      | 10 |
| No       | 0  |

IT WAS ADMITTED.

---

During the discussion on Fr. Marchesini, the Congregation came to know that Fr. Marchesini does have a sizable sum, pertaining to the house of the Stimmate, without sufficient documents to guarantee its security; in view of which, the members agree to entrust this to the Very Rev. Superior, and that he consider it urgent to provide, as soon as possible, that such capital, be regularly insured in legal form, so that the entire sum will bear interest.

---

Then, the last part of Proposal N. 7 of the Counc., Fr. Rigoni, came up, regarding the Capital to be restored.

He made his Report giving an account of the amount of 738.40 Lira, which would represent a Patrimonial Capital.

The Congregation retains unanimously that as soon as the state of the House warrants, that a careful and useful restoration o this sum is to be made.

---

It was time to treat of Proposal N. 2 of the Counc., Fr. Benciolini, but since the hour was late, the Session was closed, putting off the development and the discussion of such a Proposal, until tomorrow.

The Minutes were read, closed and signed:

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.  
 Fr. John Rigoni  
 Fr. Vincent Vignola  
 Fr. Francis Benciolini  
 Fr. Mark Bassi



and therefore, it was determined unanimously, to come to the aid of this house, in so far as it is permitted, so that it might obtain the amount already assigned to it.

Then, attention was turned to the request of the Very Rev. Fr. Superior, derived from the question of the Council, Fr. Rigoni, cited in the Vth Session, near the end, under # 2, and at the beginning of the subsequent VIth Session, and that it reserved to be treated and resolved, when there is had from all, the desired information, and also when Fr. Morando would be present, that is:

Whether it be agreed to send the four who have received Certificates for the examinations taken, to make a year of apprenticeship at S. Nicolò.

Before passing to a decision on this point, a subordinated question was asked:

In the case that it be voted to send them, or not to send them: will there be understood by this that for the coming school year, the Schools will be opened?

On this proposition, a vote was taken, by Yea and Nay:

|          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| Present  | 10                          |
| Voting   | 9 [Fr. Vicentini abstained] |
| Majority | 6                           |
| Yes      | 9 <sup>168</sup>            |
| No       | 0                           |

Then, a vote was taken on the principal Proposition:

Whether or not, they will be sent to make the apprenticeship at S. Nicolò

This was put to a vote, by Yea and Nay, and the result was:

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Present  | 10  |
| Voting   | 8 [Fr. Vicentini abstaining, and also Fr. Rigoni] |
| Majority | 5   |
| Yes      | 8   |
| No       | 0   |

Then, there was taken up the last Proposal of the Procurator, Fr. Rigoni, which is the last Proposal on the List, under N. 8, i.e.:

Fr. Rigoni renews the request of last year, and as already contained in the **Minutes of the VIIth Congregation**, the 29<sup>th</sup> of October, under 3 12.

To the request of Fr. Rigoni, asking to be exonerated from the Offices of Councilor and Procurator general, and to be instead applied in the ecclesiastical and religious ministry, the Congregation replies that it does not believe that it can condescend entirely. Only for the sake of relieving him, the Congregation, also acting on his express

<sup>168</sup> There is a generally consistent near unanimity whenever the prospect of the **schools** comes up as an essential element in the Apostolic Mission – from the time immediately following Fr. Marani's death – and long before Fr. Tabarelli would ever be able exert such 'total influence' over the minds of the whole Chapter here [as some maintain he did, over the *boni viri*]. Here, though, we are some 14 years before the stormy **XIIth General Chapter**. Fr. Marani, who considered the schools merely as a *palliative*, hiding the real intention of the Community, was less convinced regarding the **schools** as a central aspect of the Apostolic Mission, according to the changing needs of the Church – it pertained to the *varia et propria ministeria*. [CF # 185].



VV. J.M.J. <sup>170</sup>

**A RÉSUMÉ OF THE VIII<sup>th</sup> GENERAL CONGREGATION,  
Held on the last days of September, and he first days of October  
1876.**

**Ist.** There was taken under examination the words that appear in the *Appendix*, Chap. I, Parag. 6, sixth line: **Moreover, they will have the right of active vote for everything...** - and there was added the word: **respectively**, so that the full rendition reads: **Moreover, they will all have the right of active voice for everything respectively, except, etc.** - that thus there would be understood, without equivocation, the clear disposition of Chap. I, Parag. 2, second line: **both these [Directors of Houses, who do not have the Grade] and the Priest Collaborators, in those matters, and only for those matters, for which they have been admitted, can have a vote, if the Congregation judges them capable and competent of casting a vote.**

The Congregation then proclaimed unanimously that the moment in which it will decide in what things the Directors of the Houses, not having the **Grade**, will be authorized to give their vote, and this is when the List of the matters will be discussed in the Congregation, will be drawn up, and definitively discussed.

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**IInd.** The Congregation defined: That speaking absolutely, for the foundation of a new House, there is not to be sought he convocation of the General Congregation, except in the case that the General Councilors judge it necessary to convoke it.

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**III.** It accepted the project to found a House of the Congregation in Bassano.

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**IV.** It asked three Definitors for a Declaration on **Rule 3, of Chap. I, Section I, Part VIII** <sup>171</sup>, *In our Churches, there will not be held funeral rituals, nor funeral stipends, nor chaplaincies, nor anniversary celebrations, or anything similar.*

The Definitors must, within this month of October, send to the Very Rev. Superior, for the solution of cases, that might arise in the meantime, from the coming November, until a new Congregation, in which then the resolution of the Definitors will be submitted, to be either accepted, or rejected.

---

**V<sup>th</sup>** A Proposal was made for an explanation of Rule I, of Chap. II, Part III <sup>172</sup>: *All the clerics and also Lay Brothers who have good voices, will learn ecclesiastical music, but not figured chant. However, Deacons and Priests will abstain, ...etc.*

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<sup>170</sup> There is also included here this 4 page Resume' of this Gen. Chapter, compiled by Fr. Sembianti, on paper measuring 12 x 8.

<sup>171</sup> C.D.B., P. VII, Sec. I, c. 1, n. 3 = CF # 92

The majority retains that this Rule contains the obligation for Clerics, before they are Deacons, and for Lay Brothers, who have the ability to learn plain, or ecclesiastical chant, and prohibits them all from learning *figured* chant.

There was retained, however, that the use of *figurato* chant, is not prohibited in our Churches.

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**Vith** The number of Examiners for the First and Second Scrutinies was filled. As Examiners for the First Scrutiny, the following were added to Fr. James Marini, Councilor for the House of Novitiate:

Fr. Pio Gurisatti

Fr. Peter Beltrami, Councilor of the House of Novitiate

Fr. Richard Tabarelli

To the Examiner, by his very Office, for the Second Scrutiny, Fr. John Rigoni, Procurator General, there were added:

Fr. Francis Benciolini, Gen. Council.

Fr. Vincent Vignola, Gen. Council.

Fr. Charles Zara

All these Examiners, except the Examiner by his very office, Fr. Rigoni, will remain in office until the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, 1877.

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**VII.** To the question: Whether, notwithstanding this Rule of ours: *Serve God and the Church, entirely gratuitously* <sup>173</sup>, after some spiritual ministry has been rendered, is it possible to receive something not indeed as a stipend, but as a simple gift. It was unanimously responded: that, according to that Rule, it is not possible to receive anything, even as a gift, for any ministry of ours, but that, however, the disposition in the *Appendix*, Chap. II, Parag. 3, n. 15, still remains intact, i.e.: Having taken into consideration the persons, times and other circumstances [which pertains to the Superior], this might be dispensed for a particular individual, and for some case; now, however, for all cases, nor generally, by way of Statute; as well as that other Statute in the same *Appendix*, Chap. and Parag., cited above, n. 26.

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**VIII** The Very Rev. Fr. Superior expressed that he has kept in mind the recommendations made to him in the **VIIth General Congregation** regarding the **Mission** in Sweden, and that he has not omitted to make provisions, in so far as circumstances allowed him, that this project may, at some time that is undetermined, be put into act, and he promised to continue such provisions, adding that this is in accord with the S. Congregation of the Propaganda.

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<sup>172</sup> C.D.B., P. III, c. 3, n. 1 = CF # 45.

<sup>173</sup> CF # 3.

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**IXth** To the request that the disposition of the Constitutions, *Appendix*, Chap. II, Parag. 3, n. 21, be put into execution, where it states that there be sent to the Superior, and by him, to the Procurator general, the balance of entries and annual expenses, the inventory, and the patrimonial state, together with the changes undergone, etc., for each House – the Very Rev. Fr. Superior responded: he considered reasonable such a request, and declared that for his part, he will see to it that the cited Rule will be executed, in so far as this will be possible.

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**Xth** It was adopted that their annual accounts do not have to be presented to the Very Rev. Superior, that he might send them to the Procurator General for those Members, who, having estates, and choosing Administrators outside the Congregation, do not have fixed revenues, for purposes or persons extraneous to the Congregation.

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**XIth** Having taken into consideration the Capitular Acts of the House of S. Bernardino, as regards their allotment, that for the said House had been made in the **VIIIth General Congregation**, it was recognized that the view of that Congregation was mistaken, because of inexact information; and therefore, it was determined to come to the aid of that House, as far as it is possible, so that it might obtain the sum assigned to it.

Verona, October 31, 1876

Fr. Joseph Sembianti <sup>174</sup>, Sec.  
of the Congregation  
(Green oval SEAL  
APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES)




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<sup>174</sup> It should be noted that Fr. Sembianti took the Oath of Office as General Councilor, on March 2, 1874. He had served as Secretary of this **VIIIth General Congregation** just concluded, and occupied important positions in the community, due to the esteem in which he was held. In this time, Fr. Sembianti served as Director of the ‘Mother House’, the Stimate in Verona.

However, under the date of November 5, 1879, a little over three months prior to the opening of the next, the **IXth General Congregation [February 1880]** there is an unusual letter of his addressed to the Superior General – in which Fr. Sembianti brings up the unhappy case of Fr. Sogaro, who had already left the Community. The tenor of this letter seems to be that Fr Sembianti himself is in some kind of a crisis. This letter will appear among the Introductory Documents of the next, the **IXth General Chapter**.

**IXth**

**GENERAL CONGREGATION**

**FEBRUARY 17 – 25, 1880**

**§§§§§**



**ACTS**  
**of the**  
**IXth GENERAL CONGREGATION** <sup>175</sup>  
**§§§**

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△△△

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<sup>175</sup> These **Minutes** appear in an uncovered booklet, on 40 pages of un-lined paper, 8 x 12 inches. The last page contains a list of the 16 **Graduate Fathers**.

There were numerous **Proposals** for this **Chapter**, appearing on various sized paper. Those without a date have been placed just prior to February 17, 1880, the first day of the Chapter. And all these proceedings are preceded by the earlier mentioned unusual Letter from the General Councilor, Fr. Joseph Sembianti **General Councilor** – who seems to be in a vocational crisis.

## A MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENT

### [A Letter of Crisis?]

VV. J.M.J.<sup>176</sup>

PN 321<sup>177</sup>

Very Rev. and dear Father,

I received yesterday your most gracious letter, with the date of October 31<sup>st</sup>, and I am grateful again, one more time, for the most kind understanding of your Very Reverend Paternity. I am most sorry for having opened this wound, of which your Paternity speaks to me, and your grief only increases mine all the more. But, how could this be helped, my most loving Father, that these two wounds be opened when the most imperative reasons imposed them on me?... And what are these reasons? They are not at all secret, nor will I try to cover them, or hide them. I accept the invitation that Your Paternity extends to me; I will be obedient to my Superior at the Stimate, and I will be open and sincere, also on this occasion, as I always have been in every encounter with my Superiors. By this, I believe I will give to Your Paternity, and to all my Confreres, an evident proof of the rectitude of my intentions, and of the maturity of my resolutions.

I believe that I should point out to Your Paternity, that up until now in this matter, I have not forgotten at all, the 48<sup>th</sup> Rule of the **Common Rules: No one will take counsel from externs, without the permission of the Superior** – and in my own case, I am without fear of having broken it. The formalities of being absolved from the vows, I do not recall; I remember only that for Fr. Sogaro, there was not employed much solemnity, and that the *Appendix* existed then, as now. I do not remember exactly what the late Fr. Lenotti said to me, even though I was a Councilor, on the reason why Fr. Sogaro asked his release from the vows, as certainly he did not say it publicly in the Council, where he only exposed that all the means had been employed, and that they had all come to naught, to have him change his decision, and in insisting in asking to be released, he asked those in the meeting, what should be done. But, this makes no difference; the prescribed formalities, I repeat, I do not remember them, nor do I pretend that they should be omitted for me. The motives for my request, I will expose to Your Very Reverend Paternity, and to the entire Congregation.

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<sup>176</sup> This is a Letter, addressed to the Superior General [?], from **Fr. Joseph Sembianti**, expressing some kind of personal vocational crisis [?], is dated **November 5, 1879**, just three months before the opening of this **IXth General Chapter in February 1880**. The Letter has nothing to do with the previous **VIIIth General Chapter**, concluded three and one half years earlier [October 1876], of which Fr. Sembianti was Secretary – he was also General Councilor and Director of the House of the Stimate. For this **IXth General Chapter**, Fr. Sembianti is listed as **Director of the House of Bassano. Fr. Vicentini**, however, would be elected Secretary of this **IXth General Chapter**, to take Fr. V. Vignola's place, who found he work too difficult for his health.

This unusual Letter was found by the translator in the Folder of the **XIVth General Chapter [September 1891]**. The Letter is also mentioned in the stormy **XIIth General Chapter [September 1890]**.

It was written on faintly lined paper, measuring 10 x 8 inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, measuring 5 x 8 inches. Fr. Sembianti wrote on two and one half sides.

<sup>177</sup> “PN” – does this mean ‘*Postal Number*’?

I therefore, will be at the Stimate on next Wednesday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month, on the first coach, bringing with me young Tommasi <sup>178</sup>, and I hope to be able to return the same day. And therefore, I do not think it is necessary for you to substitute for me.

I would be most obliged if our Paternity will continue to recommend this matter with me, and that all be done with holy charity, and in conformity to His divine good pleasure.

With the greatest respect, I am

Of your Very Reverend Paternity

Bassano, Nov. 5, 1879

A most humble son and devoted Servant,

Fr. Joseph Sembianti.




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<sup>178</sup> This would be John Baptist Tomasi, who would eventually be the **Vth Superior General**, of the Congregation, who would be elected during the **XVIIIth General Chapter**, September 1911. When the North American students arrived in Rome in mid October 1952, Fr. Tomasi was living in retirement at the Generalate, Via Mazzarino, 16 – in Rome, St. Agata of the Goths. On the Feast of John the Evangelist, Dec. 27, 1954, while he was offering his customary 8:00 a.m. Mass in the Church for the *beate*, he repeated the Creed four times. The Superiors were called, and he was brought upstairs to his room [where the local Superiors would live in subsequent years]. It was found he had suffered a stroke. He passed away about one week later, on January 2, 1954, at the age of almost 87. He was mourned by the American students, due to his friendliness – and even help in their studies that he offered. At that time, he was also the Spiritual Director of some of the *Folklarini*, frequent visitors to St. Agatha's in those times. Therefore, in 1880, 'young Tomasi', from Bassano, would have been 13 years old, being born Jan. 24, 1866.

**“In the Name of the Lord. Amen.”** <sup>179</sup>

I, Francis Benciolini, Director of the House of S. Maria del Giglio, in obedience to the orders of the Very Rev. Superior General, Peter Vignola, in his Decree of Convocation of the Congregation, after having had its three Masses celebrated, as prescribed in that Decree, today, January 29, 1880, have assembled the Chapter of this House of mine, composed of the rev. Frs. Pio Gurisatti, Angelo Graziani, Richard Tabarelli, to deliberate concerning the Proposals and requests to be presented to the General Congregation. After having invoked the divine assistance, the discussion got underway, and all the Capitulars expressed the desire that there be manifested to the Congregation, that nothing is closer to their hearts, than the exact observance of the fundamental and **Original Constitutions of the Ven. Founder**, persuaded, as they are, that only in this way, will they be able to obtain the blessings of God. Therefore, in particular, they came to make the following Proposals:

**I.** And, first of all, considering that the principal reason indicated by the Very Rev. Superior, for the convocation of the Congregation, is the Election of the Procurator General, it was asked if it might be more in conformity with our ordinary Rule, that such an election be declared the ordinary competency of the Superior General – having read the **1<sup>st</sup> Chapter of the XIIth Part, *On the Manner of Government***, and precisely **Num. 4** <sup>180</sup>, where the Ven. Founder orders that the Superior *is to have entire authority*, which has, among other motives, the impropriety of multiplying dignities, and of giving the unhappy occasion of schisms and factions: as also, **n. 10 of the same Chapter** <sup>181</sup>, where he prescribes that: *... the judgment concerning the proper Grade of each confrere, and the determination and distribution of duties, will be entirely in the hands of the Superior of the Institute* -: having diligently discussed the matter, the Capitulars unanimously decided to make [as they do now] to the Congregation, a formal appeal for the above-mentioned rule; that, imploring the Congregated Fathers to choose to examine whether the unfolding of the Election of the Procurator General for the Congregation, is not perhaps, in no way contrary to those taxative and organic Prescriptions of the Ven. Founder.

**II.** Having brought, then, the consideration of the second motive expressed in the Decree of Convocation, noted above, i.e., the Election of the General Councilors, and having read and thought over the dispositions with which the Ven. Founder justly wishes to entrust such an Election to the whole Congregation, and speaks of their duties and powers; those words, taken from **n. 4, of Chap. I, of Part XII** <sup>182</sup>, *Only Councilors will*

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<sup>179</sup> The first five Proposals, dated January 29, 1880, were from S. Maria del Giglio [the House of the *Dereletti*]. They appear in purple ink, on paper measuring 16 and one half by 13 inches. This was folded, making 4 writings sides, of unlined paper, 8 and one quarter by 13 inches.

<sup>180</sup> C.D.B., P. XII, c.1, n. 4 = CF # 301. Fr. Bertoni copied this Rule *verbatim*, from Suarez, Bk 10, c. 1, n. 10: showing how St. Ignatius took many reasons from the Fathers as to why he chose the monarchical form of Government, p. 1061, a.

<sup>181</sup> C.D.B., P. XII, c. 1, n. 10 = CF # 307. This Constitution, too, is taken *verbatim*, by Fr. Bertoni from Suarez, Bk 10, c. 3, n. 5 – p. 1067, a.

<sup>182</sup> C.D.B., P. XII, c. 1, n. 4 = CF # 301 = Suarez, p. 1061 a.

*be added to him, not co-judges*, especially in co-relation to those others, of the same Chapter, n. 1<sup>183</sup>, with which he establishes the norm: *Although the Superior in governing ought to use the counsel of his confreres, St. Benedict states that 'nevertheless that which he maintains to be more salutary, depends on his judgment, and then all shall obey him' [Rule 3 & 65].* And as in the *Appendix to Part XII of the Constitutions* [in which, with great zeal and excellent results, it was sought to develop the concise Rules of the Ven. Founder, particularly on that Part which pertains to the manner of organic- internal government], it demands often, and in some determinations and decisions, that may seem to be the definitive jurisdiction of the Superior, the **definitive vote** of the Councilors: there is proposed to make a second appeal that would reaffirm the Primitive Rule, and insure it at least against those apparent antinomies – And this Proposal, too, obtained a unanimous vote.

**III.** In the treatment of the two preceding Proposals, naturally, the discussion fell on the Capital Constitution of the Ven. Founder, with which he wished the Superior General elected for life<sup>184</sup> - as also in those most wise rules with which the **IInd General Congregation**, in the *Appendix to Part XII* of the Constitutions, Chap. II, Parag. I, in the act of denying for one single time, this form of Election, expressed in the firm proposal: **'not to withdraw in the least from this form of government, indicated by the Founder, as soon as circumstances allow.'**

- And here, the spontaneous desire arose of asking, whether the changed circumstances through the long course of almost ten years, would now counsel, or at least permit the Congregation to carry out its expressed wish of clinging to the observance of that fundamental statute. –

And as the manifestation of this desire cannot seem, neither inopportune, or premature [seeing that it must be discussed in the Gen. Congregation, concerning the election of the Procurator General, and of the general Councilors, and that these remain in Office until the Election of the Superior General, also the question of electing the latter, can rightfully be considered as connected with the former]: thus, the Proposal came to be formulated:

The House of S. Maria del Giglio, formally intercedes for the observance of that Rule of the *Compendium Rude*, n. 8, that states: *The nature of the government is this, that there will be over all, a Prelate for life.* This was unanimously accepted.

**IV.** In the fourth place, there was a discussion also on **the high school education for extern students**<sup>185</sup>, and it was asked if it would be out of place to beseech the Congregation if it wanted to promote and decree the erection of a public High School, that there might be gradually continued the education, and the instruction imparted in our Elementary Schools, with such profit to the youth, and the applause of good people.

- And it was found that this had already been decreed, or better, discussed, in the **Fifth general Congregation, having been unanimously recognized** [as appears in its

<sup>183</sup> C.D.B., P. XII, c. 1, n. 1 = CF # 298 - a paraphrase of Suarez, Bk 10, c. 1, n. 8, p. 1060 b.

<sup>184</sup> cf. CF # 8.

<sup>185</sup> Once more there is the urgent appeal for the Congregation to return to the ministry of teaching, which was long ago considered as *one of the principal ends of the Congregation, that was born and flourished with teaching* [cf. *Proposal of the House of the Stimmate, Feb. 24, 1874, to the Vth General Chapter* – a consistent appeal almost immediately following Fr. Marani's death].

authentic **Minutes** \*, the necessity of taking part in the public education of the youth. There was imposed on the Superior to provide that some of our members might obtain legal qualification for his school teaching, so that there might be begun [with a view, though, of the Councilors], the erection of a public high school.

- However, it was believed proper to ask the General Congregation, that at the renewal of these same good intentions, to add authoritative decisions that would tend to direct practically, **the attention of this matter of utmost importance**, to the Superior. And this Petition is unanimously forwarded.

As for what pertains to the Elementary School, already established, it was observed that it would perhaps be **more in conformity with religious décor, and to the old practice of our First Fathers**<sup>186</sup>, that the little children of the first grade, be given over to the care and the more fitting education of women teachers, and there be accepted only young boys of the second class, or at least, of the so-called ‘First Superior Class’ – and this proposal, too, is unanimously presented.

V. Lastly, in treating of the importance, especially of the moral and religious education of the extern students of our city, and more especially, of our neighborhood, with the erection of a sort of *Patronato*, there was one who said that the results achieved so far by the foundation of the House of Bassano, was not entirely inconformity with its projected hopes, whether as regards the advantage of the youth there, and particularly, as regards the increase of the décor and opinion of our nascent Congregation.

- And following this, it was proposed to ask the General Congregation that it might wish to take into consideration these doubts [which because of the facts and data that reinforce them, unfortunately, are well founded], to examine also if it might seem better advice to gather in the forces that are too isolated, and too little productive, and in which the regular common life finds excessive inconvenience, and difficulty, to reinforce the other Houses, already solidly founded, and to establish a *Patronato*, so desired in our city, in this area.

And this last Petition also received a unanimous vote.

S. Maria del Giglio, January 29, 1880.

Fr. Francis Benciolini  
Fr. Pio Gurisatti<sup>187</sup>  
Fr. Richard Tabarelli  
Fr. Angelo Graziani.

**“In the Name of the Lord. Amen”**<sup>188</sup>

<sup>186</sup> Clearly the **Apostolic Mission of the Schools** was for this time and place, a matter of utmost importance – and in accord with the first Fathers.

<sup>187</sup> Comparing hand-writing, it seems as though Fr. Gurisatti is the one who took these copious notes.

On this Wednesday, the 11<sup>th</sup> [eleventh] of February, 1880, since by special Decree, the General Congregation has been convoked by the Very Rev. Superior General, for this coming Wednesday next, the Chapter of this House of the Stimmate, assembled to gather from its members the Proposals that they might wish to propose to the same Congregation. This Chapter was composed of nine members of the same Congregation. This Chapter was composed of nine members having a vote, while it should have been comprised of ten <sup>189</sup>. The members present were: the rev. Frs. **Zara, Bassi, Beltrami, Marchesini, Marini, Rigatti, Magagna, Gasperotti, and the Deacon, Battisti**. Two others who would have had the right in these days, are in temporary residence in another House. They are Fathers **Pizzighella** and **Gradinati**.

After the Chapter was opened, each one was asked what Proposals he might wish to make. The following were made, discussed and voted upon.

1. That the General Congregation might choose a Commission entrusted with reviewing the Rules of the particular Offices, and review them for the use of the Congregation. – this was admitted with votes, 7 to 2.
2. That there might be assigned to the House of the Stimmate, an amount for family expenses. – this was unanimously admitted.

As the opportune time had passed, the continuation of this was put off to another session, that will take place tomorrow evening

The Chapter was continued today, February 12<sup>th</sup>, and the following Proposals were made, discussed and voted upon.

1. that the Rules of the Pontifical Constitutions are observed in the Admission to Vestition, and in the Admission to profession, these same be approved for Novitiate. – this was admitted, eight votes to one.

Not finding other Proposals to make, the closing of the Chapter took place, with all those present signing, and those who were present yesterday.

|                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Fr. Charles Zara <sup>190</sup> | Fr. Alexis Magagna   |
| Fr. Mark Bassi                  | Fr. Louis Gasperotti |
| Fr. Peter Beltrami              | Frat. Louis Battisti |
| Fr. Marchesini                  |                      |
| Fr. Marini                      |                      |
| Fr. Rigatti                     |                      |

**“In the Name of the Lord. Amen.” <sup>191</sup>**

<sup>188</sup> Next appear the Minutes of the 2 Sessions of the House Chapter of the Stimmate. They are found on one side of a single sheet of white, un-lined paper, 8 and one half x 12 inches.

<sup>189</sup> Fr. Andrew Sterza submitted 8 of his own Proposals, on Feb. 14, 1880.

<sup>190</sup> Fr. Zara seems to have been the Secretary of this House Chapter of the Stimmate, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 1880.

### Parma, February 12, 1880.

On this day, having assembled the Chapter of the House of Parma, all the members having the right, were present, namely: the Very Rev. Fr. Director, **Fr. Vincent Vignola, Fr. Louis Morando, Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani, Fr. Joseph Zandonai, and Fr. Bonaventure Vidalli.**

Fr. Director opened by mentioning the convocation already known, and he scope of the imminent General Congregation, and invited all the Capitulars to expose the proposals that they desired to have presented to the Congregation.

There was one who pointed out that there should be recognized a cause of displeasure and disagreement in the limitation of the authority of the Superior, established in various points of the *Appendix to Part XII of the Constitutions*, in which there is a departure from that which the Venerated Founder established in general, in **Chap. I, of the same Part XII** <sup>192</sup>.

Another added that greater respect and efficiency would be acquired both outside, and within our Rules, if there was a Superior Approbation, and therefore, after various other observations, the following Proposals were concluded:

#### Proposals

1<sup>st</sup> revision of the *Appendix*, reducing it into full conformity with that which the Founder established in the Constitutions:

a.] regarding the Election of the Superior for life <sup>193</sup>;  
 b. regarding the Councilors, who *as Councilors, and not as co-judges, will be added to him* <sup>194</sup> - and that they will be called together, *as often as he will judge it opportune* <sup>195</sup>.

2<sup>nd</sup> That the Election of the Procurator General devolve upon the Superior General.

3<sup>rd</sup> That the negotiations be carried out for a Superior Approbation of our rules.

All finding themselves in agreement, without further delay, the members signed their own names.

**Fr. Vincent Vignola, Director**  
**Fr. Louis Morando**  
**Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani** <sup>196</sup>  
**Fr. Joseph Zandonai**  
**Fr. Bonaventure Vivalli**

VV. M.J. <sup>197</sup>

<sup>191</sup> The Proposals from the House of Parma appear on a single sheet of white, un-lined paper, 7 and one fourth by 11 inches. Both sides are written on.

<sup>192</sup> C.D.B., P. XII, c. 1 = CF ## 298-307.

<sup>193</sup> CF # 8.

<sup>194</sup> CF # 301.

<sup>195</sup> CF # 303.

<sup>196</sup> Comparing the hand-writing, Fr. Perazzani seems to have been the Secretary of the House Chapter of Parma



### **Proposals of Fr. Andrew Sterza to the General Congregation**

At the time in which the Domestic Chapter was held, because of a legitimate reason, I was absent, and was unable to expose a number of proposals to be submitted to the consideration of the General Congregation. Therefore, that which I could not do at the time, I do now, by presenting in this, my letter, that which seems to me as best before God. Therefore, as I sincerely hope, that in our very small Congregation, there flourish unchanged the observance of the Constitutions, left to us by the Venerable Founder, I propose what follows:

Ist That it be studied to see if, by now, there has ceased to exist those present circumstances, that suggested the election of the Superior General for a time, with a sad departure from the Fundamental Constitutions.

IInd That it be studied to see whether the creation of the Superior General, with his relative duties, as exist in the *Appendix*, is in conformity with the intention of the Ven. Founder, as indicated in his Constitutions.

IIIrd That it be studied to see whether for the good religious life of the Apostolic Missionary, the rules of the Ven. Founder suffice with the good customs that our first Fathers left us, without the addition of those new rules, which were inserted among the **Common Rules** of the *Appendix*.

IVth That there be studied whether it is possible and would be better for the Superior General, residing at the House of the Stimmate, to be for now, also the Director of the same House, with the assistance, in so far as he is Director, of the Vicar of his choice, who could be Economus and Master of Exterior Discipline.

Vth And also the Councilors, assigned to each Director, not be an empty name, but that they be heard in those matters of greater account, as when it is a question of expenses, acquisition, repairs and similar extraordinary matters; and especially, when it is a question of assigning the Prefect of the Aspirants to other Students. Very grave reasons urge me to make this Proposal, which I reserve to expose verbally.

VIth That for the conservation of good order, and beautiful regular observance, certain times be fixed for the Officials in which they must give an account of their Office, to the respective Superiors: and whenever there is any abuse, or disorder, the Superiors will see to it with prudent kindness, that a remedy be made, so that the spirit and regular observance might not fail.

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<sup>197</sup> Fr. Sterza was absent from the House Chapter of February 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, at the Stimmate. His 8 Proposals appear here in his beautiful hand-writing, on a sheet of lined paper, 10 x 8 inches, that was folded to make 4 writing sides, 5 x 8 inches. His Proposals cover three sides.

VIIth That regarding the Novices, that they be made to observe the Rule of the Ven. Founder, who wanted them assigned to *humble tasks*<sup>198</sup>, and not to positions and prefectures; ‘so that they might not fall into pride, into the judgment of the devil’, as St. Paul would say – also, it is asked if, and what conditions are imposed and proposed to them, when they are professed. The reason for this question will be given vocally.

VIIIth That it be studied to see whether it would be better to modify the pious Evening exercise of Fridays, in the Church of the Stimmate, so that it might be rendered more fruitful: and whether it would be better to suppress in the said Church, the mass assigned for 9:15 on Ferial Days, and 11:15 on Feast Days.

Verona, the 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1880.



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<sup>198</sup> cf. CF # 36.

### The House of Bassano <sup>199</sup>

Having seen that a Community comprised of only three members, does not favor the maintenance of the religious spirit, and the full observance of what is demanded by our Rules,

Having seen, after the experience of three years, that only the *Patronato*, as it has been up to now offers the least recompense for our troubles and fatigue, and that **in the field of education that has been offered to us, there is a hope that we could do more and better** <sup>200</sup> ;

The under-signed, also in the name of his companion, Fr. Julius Zanini, who authorizes him to do so by letter, that has been read by the Very Rev. Superior General,

Proposes

That the Congregation might wish to study the manner with which the foundation made at Bassano, might be able to facilitate better, which it has not done up to now, the regular observance and the conservation of the religious spirit, in the individuals who reside here, and that it provide for them, the manner of bringing about the greater glory of God, and the greater advantage of the town.

From the Stimmate, February 15, 1880.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti,  
Dir. of the House of Bassano.




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<sup>199</sup> The Proposals for the House of Bassano were written in Verona, by Fr. Sembianti. They appear on one side of white, un-lined paper, like drawing paper, 8 and one half by 12 inches.

<sup>200</sup> Once again, **education** is considered as a viable option for the living of the **Apostolic Mission**.

VV J.M.J. <sup>201</sup>

Very Reverend Father Superior,

Fr. Joseph <sup>202</sup> will have already presented you with my humble respects and cordial best wishes. He will also have spoken to you of my great desire that there be founded here the regular classes for the young boys, who, at the same time, would be received into a boarding-type College. This was my first idea, which is manifested to Your Reverence, when I visited this past January. You know, partly from your own observations, and partly from the most dear, above-mentioned Father, the circumstances of the place and of the house that this project can be realized.

It would be my desire that by next November, the four elementary classes might be opened. The rooms for the Fathers, and for the classes, will be readied. I, then, would be obliged to give the Rev. Fathers 200 [two hundred] Lira every year for each Father. It is most clear, that I do not know of anyone else, who has done as much, and that it is known sufficiently, that the sole desire to do good, moves this rev. Congregation, to undertake with such effort and so many sacrifices, such unpleasant tasks.

I know from the much esteemed Rev. Fr. Joseph, that presently Your reverence is to hold a special meeting. I beseech your well known goodness and kindness, that you will make clear this desire of mine to the rev. Frs. Who in these days, will be gathered together. To tell you that if this idea becomes a reality, it would be for me an inexplicable satisfaction, which makes it useless to write it. I have before my eyes the great good that these excellent Fathers are doing in my parish, and the even greater good that they will do when the boarding-type College will be opened for the elementary and high school students.

I present to Your reverence, the great sense of indebtedness by which I feel bound. I ask you to give my respectful wishes to Fathers Rigoni, Morando and Tabarelli.

I am, with profound respect

Of Your Reverence.

Bassano, February 17, 1880

Your most devoted Servant

John Baptist Gobbi,  
Mitered Arch-Priest

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<sup>201</sup> This Letter of the mitered Arch-Priest, John Baptist Gobbi, of Bassano, is written on what appears to be paper, torn from an accountant's notebook, 8 and one fourth by 10 and three fourths inches. This letter covers one full side, and half of the reverse side.

<sup>202</sup> Sembianti.

### Proposals of the Superior to the Gen. Cong.<sup>203</sup>

1. After the Vote emitted by the authority of the General Congregation, of the Commission, chosen *ad hoc*, concerning the authentic declaration asked for concerning the words of the Rule: *Neither funerals, nor funeral services, etc.*,<sup>204</sup> as found in the IIIrd Session, of the **VIIIth General Congregation, p. 10**, asks whether this declaration will be formulated, and will be discussed and made a note in the Rule.
  2. Then, as various cases have arisen, in which difficulty has arisen concerning the dispositions for Admission into the Novitiate, or to Vows, of some individuals, he asks that the examiners for the Ist and IInd Scrutiny ...
  3. Religion in the Plan of Studies.
  4. Give an Account of the Marchesini case.
  5. So that the Institute will not be bound to unite again within a few months in a General Congregation, he asks the General Congregation to take up a vote immediately on the Superior General<sup>205</sup>.
- Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup. Gen.
6. On the material state of the House of Parma.

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It is proposed that there be established by the assembled General Congregation a stable Plan on the religious and literary education of the Aspirants: where they might be well prepared for the Novitiate.

2.

It is also proposed that the General Congregation [which is also according to what is prescribed by the Constitutions of our Venerated Father, **Part XII, Chap. 1, n. 3**<sup>207</sup>] might choose to investigate the spirit of its entire body: so that, if there should be any need, *defects might be corrected, and upright conduct be praised*. And that it might also wish to establish the same be done in every General Congregation.

3.

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<sup>203</sup> Here in the **IXth General Chapter Folder** appear 8, or 9 small sheets of paper, containing Proposals of individual members. A few of these are numbered, and one is dated. The first is that of the **Superior General**. It appears on a single sheet of lined, white paper 5 x 7 and three fourths inches. Fr. Vignola, in his difficult hand-writing, wrote on one side only. It seems to be notes he planned to use during the Chapter as a reminder to himself.

<sup>204</sup> **CF # 92.**

<sup>205</sup> Fr. P. Vignola had first written out his resignation as Superior General, which he then crossed out: '...he asks the Gen. Cong., to accept his resignation, which he makes of his own free will, of the Office of Sup. Gen., and to go on to the nomination of another subject, more suited, to carry out this responsibility...'

<sup>206</sup> Fr. Bassi's three Proposals appear on one side of plain unlined paper, 5 and three fourths by 8 and one fourth.

<sup>207</sup> **C.D.B., P. XII, c. 1, n. 3 = CF # 300**

It is proposed to the same General Congregation that [taking into consideration the present increase and development of or Institute], it might choose to establish as a law that at least in the first year of the Novitiate, the Novice might be absolutely free from every distraction of literary study.

Fr. Bassi

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**N. 6** <sup>208</sup>

That the economical and patrimonial state, with the changes undergone, in the individual Houses be made known to the Congregation.

That the Congregation pronounce itself as to whether it would be well to establish this rendering of accounts, be done in every General Congregation, when between one and another of these Congregations, at least a year passes.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti

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**N. 7** <sup>209</sup>

Taking into consideration the actual increase of the Congregation, the Fathers should look into the matter to see if now is the time to make effective the rule that prescribes the Third Year of Novitiate <sup>210</sup>.

Thought should be given to the uniformity of the **habit** <sup>211</sup> of the Lay Brothers.

For a better procedure, and to remove the abuses on the part of the subjects that might arise, in the Houses where both the Superior General and the Director reside, provision should be made, either by way of concentration, so that the Superior General is also the local Director, or that it be established that the subjects depend on the Director, regarding their offices, dispensations and assignments.

Fr. Charles Zara

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<sup>208</sup> There now appear six sheets of white, un-lined drawing paper, 8 and one half by 6 inches, with the various Proposals of individual members. These were numbered on the reverse side, as is being indicated by these numbers in the top upper left hand corner.

<sup>209</sup> Fr. Zara's Proposal were first numbered "6" – but, on the reverse side, this was changed to "7".

<sup>210</sup> This seems to refer to the Founder's further year of Probation *when studies have been completed* – CF # 152 – *Schola Affectus* - cf. CSJ n. 516.

<sup>211</sup> This does not always seem clear in the **Original Constitutions: no specific habit, but only that of better ecclesiastics** [CF # 6]; - **Religious Habit for Novitiate** [CF # 32] - **Vestition after High School** [CF# 69]

**N. 8**<sup>212</sup>

To the General Congregation of Apostolic Missionaries  
Verona, the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 1880

Fr. Dominic Vicentini proposes that the Congregation establish a Commission of some of its members, whose task it will be to review accurately, the *Appendix to Part XII* of our Constitutions, to observe if, having regard to the brevity of time in which it was drawn up, there has not perhaps passed into it, some matters not sufficiently pondered, or in less conformity with our Constitutions. This Commission, then, will report to the next General Congregation.

The same Fr. Vicentini also proposes that the conferral of the **Grade** in our Congregation, be done with some solemnity of Rite, as, for example, with the imposition of the Crucifix of a **Missionary**, accompanied by fitting prayers, either from the hand of the Superior General, or by another delegated by him.

Fr. Dom. Vicentini

**N. 10**<sup>213</sup>

Fr. Benciolini asks to be exonerated from the Office of Admonitor.

It is proposed as a means of reviving the spirit, a Renewal of Vows, in some circumstances ... Carrara<sup>214</sup>

**N. 12**<sup>215</sup>

1. An Oath of Secrecy on whatever is said during it, and then also with future **Graduate Fathers**.

2. That there be drawn up a chronological list of the Decrees of the General Congregations.

3. An explanation of the Rule, n. 3, Chap. VI, Part IX, *When some are sent...*<sup>216</sup>

Of another, **n. 9, Chap VI, Part IV**<sup>217</sup>, *Also Chairs of Theology...etc.*

4. That it might draw up a Plan, with which there will be given to each and everyone, the convenience of making in full, the Holy Exercises, every year, in conformity to **Rule n. 1, Chap I, Part IV**<sup>218</sup>

Fr. J. Sembianti

<sup>212</sup> Fr. Vicentini's Proposals were first numbered "6", but on the reverse side this was changed to "7" – and then finally to "8".

<sup>213</sup> This Proposal is almost illegible – it is listed "N. 10" – meaning that "N. 9" is either missing, or it is one of those listed above, without a number.

<sup>214</sup> This brief sentence appears 'lost' in the documentation and is incomplete. It is separated from other Proposals submitted by Fr. Bellino Carrara.

<sup>215</sup> This "N. 12" which is rather difficult to decipher, contains other proposals submitted by Fr. Sembianti.

<sup>216</sup> **C.D.B. P. IX, c. 6, n. 3 – CF # 184 – gratuitous service.**

<sup>217</sup> **C.D.B., P. IV, c. 6, n. 9 = CF # 67**

<sup>218</sup> **C.D.B., P IV, c. 1, n. 1 – CF # 47 'e' [5<sup>th</sup> Paragraph]**

**Proposals of Fr. Bellino Carrara**

**I.** The Procurator General be elected by the Superior

**II.** The Election of the Superior General for life, is a **Fundamental Constitution**<sup>219</sup> to which there should be no exception, even for actual circumstances.

**III.** I ask the complete faculty of dispensing from the Rules and Constitutions, that are not **Fundamental**, for the Superior General, and therefore, I petition the abrogation of Num. 28, of Parag. 3, of Chap. II of the *Appendix*.

**IV.** I ask that there be lifted from the number of cases in which it is established by the *Appendix*, as necessary to convoke the General Congregation, that of dismissing a Member, believing that for this, the authority of the Superior General is sufficient, when the General Congregation is not actually assembled.

**V.** The definitive judgment when it will be the case, *in more serious matters, and of perpetual duration*<sup>220</sup> to convoke the General Congregation, be left to the conscience of the Superior General; and that he not have to wait for this, through the judgment of his Councilors.

**VI.** From N. 7, of Parag. 2, Chap. II, of the *Appendix*, there be lifted that final clause, *which, however, he is not to grant.*

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<sup>219</sup> CF # 8, *Compendium Rude* = ‘*Fundamental Constitutions*’?

<sup>220</sup> For this wording, cf. CF # 302 – and from the Jesuit Formula, n. 2.



**The Minutes of the  
IXth General Congregation.  
In the Year of Our Lord, 1880, this Tuesday  
the 17<sup>th</sup> of February  
“In the Name of the Lord. Amen.”** <sup>221</sup>

In the Mother House of the Stimmate, in Verona, following the Convocation sent out by the Very Rev. Superior General, all the Capitulars of our Congregation were gathered in the room of the Very Rev. Fr. Founder, at the sound of the bell, after having invoked the divine assistance, with the recitation of the *Veni, Creator*, in the adjoining Oratory, the following Fathers:

- |     |           |   |
|-----|-----------|---|
| 1.  | Very Rev. | Superior General, Fr. Peter Vignola   |
| 2.  | ..        | John Rigoni, Gen. Counc., Procurator Gen.   |
| 4.  | ..        | Vincent Vignola, Gen. Counc., Director of the House of Parma <sup>222</sup>         |
| 3.  | ..        | Francis Benciolini, Gen. Counc., Admonitor, Director of the House of the Dereletti. |
| 5.  | ..        | Joseph Sembianti, Gen. Counc., Director of the House of Bassano.                    |
| 6.  | ..        | Mark Bassi, Grad., Master of Novices  |
| 8.  | ..        | Louis Morando, Graduate   |
| 7.  | ..        | Charles Zara, Director of the House of the Stimmate                                 |
| 9.  | ..        | Peter Beltrami, Gr.   |
| 10. | ..        | Dominic Vicentini, Grad., Director of S. Bernardino, Trent                          |
| 11. | ..        | Andrew Sterza, Grad.  |
| 12. | ..        | Pio Gurisatti, Grad.  |
| 13. | ..        | James Marini, Grad.   |
| 14. | ..        | Bellino Carrara, Grad.  |
| 15. | ..        | Bartholomew Perazzani, Grad.  |
| 16. | ..        | Richard Tabarelli, Graduate   |

When the number of those having the right to the Congregation was verified, as corresponding to the number of those present, the Ninth General Congregation was recognized as full, legitimate and opened. And, as such, it was unanimously declared, while previously, the Superior General had already given his opening address.

The Congregation then passed immediately to the Election of the Secretary. The ballots were passed out, then gathered and opened, and the following were found nominated:

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Fr. Vincent Vignola                          | with 8 votes. |
| Fr. Joseph Sembianti                         | 5 ..          |
| Fr. Dominic Vicentini                        | 2 ..          |
| .. Richard Tabarelli                         | 1 ..          |
| Consequently, Fr. VICENT VIGNOLA IS ELECTED. |               |

<sup>221</sup> Now follows the 40 pages of the **IXth General Chapter Minutes** in an uncovered booklet, 8 x 12 inches, as has been noted.

<sup>222</sup> The numbering actually unfolded in this way: 4 before 3; 8 before 7, in accord with seniority?

△△△

The Secretary then received the Proposals that the superior General, the Chapters of the Houses, the Councilors, and Directors and individual members present had submitted. Therefore, the Nomination of a Commission, whose task it would be to draw up a list of the matters to be treated, was taken up.

There were proposed three names to assist the Very Rev. Superior, and Secretary, and the following were nominated:

|                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Fr. Mark Bassi        | with 12 votes. |
| Fr. Pio Gurisatti     | " 9 "          |
| Fr. Louis Morando     | " 9 "          |
| Fr. Charles Zara      | " 6 "          |
| Fr. Sembianti         | " 5 "          |
| Fr. John Rigoni       | " 4 "          |
| Fr. Dominic Vicentini | " 3 "          |

Therefore: Frs. BASSI, MORANDO AND GURISATTI WERE ELECTED.

△△△

The Commission whose task it was to form a List, received the following Proposals:

**I. The Superior General 1**

x<sup>223</sup> 1. That there be communicated a declaration on the words of the Rule: *In our Churches, there will not be funerals, nor funeral services, nor anniversaries, nor chaplaincies, nor anything of the like...*<sup>224</sup>; and that this be formulated, and inserted into the Acts.

x 2. That in the nomination of the Examiners, their number be increased.

x 3. report on the findings of the Commission on the Plan of Studies.

x 4. Give an account of the Fr. Marchesini affair.

x 5. The Congregation wishes to hear what will be reported on the conditions of the House of Parma.

x 6. That without assembling again the Congregation within a few months from now, that the Election of the Superior General might be taken up.

**IIrd From the Chapter of the House of the Stimmate 2**

x 7. Revision of the Rules of the particular Offices.

x 8. Allotment for family expenses.

x 9. Observance of the Pontifical Constitutions during Novitiate.

**IIIrd From the Chapter of the House of the Dereletti 3**

x 10. That the Election of the Procurator General be devolved on the Superior General alone.

x 11. That the Councilors have consultative vote, and not definitive.

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<sup>223</sup> The 'x's' placed before the numbers seem to indicate the matter had been checked off, perhaps in the composition of the List.

<sup>224</sup> CF # 92.

- x 12. That there be established a public high school.
- x 13. That there be excluded the 1<sup>st</sup> inferior grade.
- x 14. That the House of Bassano be closed.
- 14 [bis] That the Superior General be nominated for life.<sup>225</sup>

IV. Chapter of the House of Parma 4

- x 15. Revision of the *Appendix*, especially in the points concerning the Superior General for Life.
- x 16. And on the definitive vote of the Councilors.
- x 17. And on the Election of the Procurator General.
- x 18. That negotiations get underway for a superior approbation of our Rules.

V. From the House of Bassano 5

- x 19. To find a way to provide better for regular observance and the greater advantage of this city.

From the House of Trent

No proposals

VI. From the General Councilors

Fr. Sembianti 6

- x 20. That the patrimonial and economical state of each house be made known, as this is done in every Congregation.

VII. From Fr. Charles Zara, Director of the House of the Stimmate 7

- x 21. That there be put into Effect the Third Year of Probation<sup>226</sup>
- x 22. Uniformity in the Habit of the Coadjutor Brothers.
- X 23. Whether the Superior General might also be the Director of the House where he resides, or how the dependence on the Director is to be had.

VIII. From Fr. Vicentini 8

- x 24. Revision of the *Appendix*.
- x 25. That the **Grade** be conferred solemnly.

IX From Fr. Sterza 9

<sup>225</sup> “14 bis” had appeared as a footnote of the official **Minutes**, numbered “1”, at the bottom of page 4 of the manuscript Original of the Minutes. As has been noted, the **Superior for Life** was simply a return to the *Compendium Rude*, CF # 8.

<sup>226</sup> CF # 152, after completion of studies.

- x 26. That the Superior General be elected for life.
- x 27. That the Procurator General be in conformity with the Constitutions.
- x 28. Whether the Rules of the Founder suffice, without the additions of the new Rules, added to the Common Rules.
- x 29. Whether it is better for the Superior General to be also Director.
- x 30. That the Councilors of each Director be not so merely in name.
- x 31. That there be established a time for the rendering of an account of the Officials of the respective Superiors.
- x 32. That the Rule be observed of applying the Novices to lowly services <sup>227</sup>.
- x 33. That the Services of Friday be modified, and also the last Mass.

X. **Fr. Benciolini** **10**

- x Asks to be relieved of the Office of Admonitor

XI. **Fr. Perazzani**

- x That the Renovation of Vows be promoted **11**

XII. **Fr. Sembianti** **12**

- x 34. Oath of Secrecy on what is said in the Congregation.
- x 35. Chronological List of the Decrees of the General Congregation.
- x 36. Explanation of **Rule n. 3, Chapter VI, Part IX, *When some are sent, etc.*** <sup>228</sup>
- x 37. Of the other **Rule, n. 9, Chap. 6, Part IV** <sup>229</sup>
- x 38. A plan according to which, every year, all will make the Spiritual Exercises <sup>230</sup>.

XIII, **From Fr. Carrara** **13**

- x 39. That the Procurator general be elected by the Superior.
- x 40. That the Superior General be elected for life.
- 40 bis Complete faculty for the Superior General to dispense from the Rules and Constitutions that are not **Fundamental**.
- x 41. That the Superior be able to ‘dismiss a Member’, without the need of convoking the General Congregation.
- x 42. That the definitive judgment of convoking the General Congregation be left only to the conscience of the Superior.

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<sup>227</sup> CF # 36.

<sup>228</sup> CF # 184.

<sup>229</sup> CF # 67.

<sup>230</sup> CF # 47 e.

x      **43.** That from n. 7, of Parag. II, Chap. II, of the *Appendix*, there be taken away the final phrase: *Which, however, he is not to concede, etc.*

#### **XIV. From Fr. Bassi**

**14**

x      **44.** That there be established a stable plan on the religious and literary education of the Aspirants.

x.      **45.** That the spirit of the entire body might be investigated: *that the defects be corrected, and good conduct be praised...*<sup>231</sup> And that this be done in every General Congregation.

x      **46.** That the Novice in the first year of Novitiate be absolutely free from every literary exercise.

△△△

From all these Proposals, that the purpose indicated in the Decree of the Convocation of this general Congregation, cannot be treated until the other Proposals are discussed first.

Therefore, the Commission established the following order of the discussion:

1.] Those that pertain to the revision of the *Appendix to Part XII* of our Constitutions, namely the Proposals under nn. 10, 1, 15, 17, 24, 26, 27, 28, 39, 41, 41, 42, 43, 40 [bis].

2.] Whether, because of the reasons indicated in Proposition n. 6, a new Election of the Superior General might be taken up.

3.] A communication of the definition of the Rule: *In Our Churches, etc.*, of Proposal n. 1<sup>232</sup>.

4.] A Report from the Commission on the Plan of Studies, Proposal n. 3.

5.] An account of the Marchesini affair, Prop. N. 4.

6.] The object of the Decree of Convocation of this General Congregation – the Nomination of the Procurator General, the general Councilors and the Examiners, and here belong specifically, Proposal n. 3, and n. X.

7.] As regards the house of Bassano – Proposal n. 14, 19 – to these proposals, it was suggested to add in the proper time, the others under N. 12, 13.

8.] Revision of the particular Rules, or of the various offices, Prop. N. 7, and after this, Proposals nn. 9, 21, 22, 23, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 37, 44, 45, 46.

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<sup>231</sup> **CF # 300.**

<sup>232</sup> **CF # 92**

- 9.] On the House of Parma, Prop. N. 5.
- 10.] Approval of the Constitutions, Prop. N. 18.
- 11.] Solemn conferral of the Grade, Prop. N. 25.
- 12.] Spiritual Exercises, Prop. N. 38.
- 13.] Renewal of the Vows, Prop. N. XI.
- 14.] Chronological List of the Decrees of the General Congregations, n. 35.
- 15.] Allotment to the House of the Stimmate, Prop. N. 8.
- 16.] Communication of the Economic State of the Houses, Prop. N. 20.
- 17.] Modification of the Friday Services, Prop. N. 23.
- 18.] Prop. N. 34, on the Oath, etc., will have precedence over all the others.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.  
 Fr. Mark Bassi  
 Fr. Louis Morando  
 Fr. Pio Gurisatti  
 Fr. Vincent Vignola, Secretary.



In the afternoon of this same day, the Capitulars were assembled, to proceed in their labors.

---

When the Session had been opened, the incident was brought up by one of the Graduates, on the impropriety that some of the Capitulars had already previously reached agreement on some of the nominations to be made. Those Congregated were asked, who responded through Yea and Nay, whether in the supposition of this fact, the names already presented, were to be considered as valid.

This was put to a vote, and the result was:

Yes 13







**The 18<sup>th</sup> of February 1880**  
**IInd Session**

The Congregation was re-assembled in the usual room at 3:00 p.m. of this day, and before the discussion on the proposals of the List began, it was proposed:

Whether it was proper to allow a revision of the *Appendix to Part XII* of our Constitutions?

This was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 12 |
| No     | 4  |

THE REVISION WAS ADMITTED.

---

Taking up the individual Proposals, regarding the revision of the *Appendix to Part XII of our Constitutions*, the difficulty arose, as to whether or not, there should be discussed in the present Chapter, or to leave the treatment of this to a Commission, that will have to report to the next General Congregation. It was proposed whether the individual proposals should be discussed, and discussed individually, with the Congregation being asked to vote on them immediately, or to entrust this to a Commission.

This Proposal was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 16 |
| No     | -  |

---

Then was discussed the Proposal that the Election of the Procurator General be declared the competence of the Superior General, and the Congregation was asked it would vote on this immediately.

This was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 15 |
| No     | 1  |

Therefore, the Proposal was put to a vote, under the following form:

Whether the most extraordinary circumstances that another time, once suggested that the Election of the Procurator General should devolve on the General Congregation, are now changed, so that this case be now considered the competence of the Superior General, as is the election of the other inferior Officials? – It was pointed out that such a deliberation must have a two-thirds of the votes, in observance of the disposition of the *Appendix to Part XII of our Constitutions*, Chap. I, Parag. 6, Heading 13. The result of the voting was as follows:

|            |    |
|------------|----|
| Voting     | 16 |
| Two-thirds | 11 |
| Yes        | 14 |
| No         | 2  |



Then, came the turn of the Proposals, concerning the definitive vote, or the simply consultative vote, of the Councilors of the Superior General, and it was unanimously established that there be read today, after dinner, the points of the *Appendix*, referring to the said Proposal, putting off its discussion until tomorrow; and, in the meantime, the following Proposals were taken up, with which the General Congregation was asked whether the circumstances of our Congregation, even by now, changed to permit that there be a return to the Constitutions, confirmed by the *Appendix*, regarding the Election of the Superior General for life.

This proposal, too, appearing to be of grave importance, was put off for tomorrow's discussion, following the preceding.

This Session was suspended, as it was already near noon.

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[Afternoon]

When the interrupted session was re-opened, Fr. Sterza in consequence of the voting on Proposal 10, under n. 1, of the List, said he was satisfied, and declared that also as far as he was concerned, his Proposal, regarding the Procurator General, had been answered.

---

He 28<sup>th</sup> Proposal under n. 1 of the List, was placed under discussion, with which the Congregation was asked:

Whether the Rules of the Founder suffice, without the addition of the new rules to the Common rules? - After a brief discussion, and some explanations, the Proponent [Fr. Sterza] said he was satisfied, and withdrew his Proposal.

---

In like manner, the 40<sup>th</sup> Proposal under n. 1 of the List was discussed, namely, that the Superior General can dismiss a Professed member by himself, without the need of convoking a General Congregation; and after brief declarations, the Proponent [Fr. Carrara] withdrew his Proposal especially having seen that for the dismissal of a Professed Subject, according to the *Appendix*, the Superior General need only assemble the Chapter of his Councilors, and the Directors and the Graduates, who are in the place, or near-by.

---

Having understood the meaning of **Prop. 40 [bis]**, under N. 1 of the List, that the Superior General have the full faculty of dispensing from the Rules and the Constitutions, that are not Fundamental, it was agreed that its discussion be put off until tomorrow, regarding the vote of the General Councilors, and the Congregation proceeded.

The same decision was reached from the following **12<sup>th</sup> Prop.** Under n. 1, of the List, namely, that the definitive judgment of convoking the General Congregation be left only to the conscience of the Superior General; as well as that of the immediately following Proposal, namely that from N. 7, of Parag. III, Chap. 2, of the *Appendix*, there

be removed the final clause: *which, however, he is not co concede etc.* [**quod tamen non concedat...**]<sup>234</sup>.

The Superior General, so that he would not be constrained to assemble a new Congregation for the election of the Superior General in October of this year, would be disposed to resign his Office, when the Congregation should judge that it would take up the Election of the new Superior General in the present Congregation: therefore, the following Proposal was formulated:

Whether or not, the Congregation is disposed to take up the Election of a new Superior in this same Congregation, the General offering, in this case, to submit his resignation.

This was put to a vote, and the result was:

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Voting                         | 15 |
| The Superior General abstained |    |
| Yes                            | 7  |
| No                             | 8  |

THEREFORE: THE CONGREGATION IS NOT DISPOSED TO PASS IMMEDIATELY TO A NEW ELECTION.

In consequence of this last vote, having considered the not insignificant difficulties of being able to convoke the Congregation at the end of October of this year, for the Election of the new Superior, the Congregation was asked if it judges that it could defer the new Election until February of 1881, continuing in the meantime, the Superior in his Office, until the new Election that will take place at that time –

This was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |                                     |
|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Voting | 15 [the Superior General abstained] |
| Yes    | 14                                  |
| No     | 1                                   |

Therefore: the Election of the Superior General is deferred until February 1881, and in the meantime, the present Superior General, is to continue in Office.

The Minutes were read and signed<sup>235</sup>:

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.  
 Fr. John Rigoni  
 Fr. Francis Benciolini  
 Fr. Vincent Vignola  
 Fr. Joseph Sembianti  
 Fr. Mark Bassi  
 Fr. Charles Zara  
 Fr. Louis Morando  
 Fr. Peter Beltrami  
 Fr. Andrew Sterza  
 Fr. Pio Gurisatti

Fr. James Marini  
 Fr. Bellino Carrara  
 Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani  
 Fr. Richard Tabarelli  
 Fr. Dominic Vicentini  
 Secretary

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<sup>234</sup> This Latin phrase oft-repeated in the discussions of Chapters, *quod tamen non concedat*, appears often with the *non* inserted later.

<sup>235</sup> As here, the Original Chapter Minutes were close to the end of the page – therefore, the Original was signed in two uneven columns, re-produced faithfully here.

**The 20<sup>th</sup> of February 1880**  
**IV<sup>th</sup> Session**

At 9:00 a.m. of this day, the meeting was opened with the invocation of the divine assistance, and the Very Rev. Fr. Superior, according to the Order of the Proposals [**Prop. N. 3, of the List**], recalled how in the **VIII<sup>th</sup> Congregation**, III<sup>rd</sup> session, a Commission was elected, composed of the Rev. Frs. Louis Morando, Vincent Vignola and Charles Zara, who were to study, and present to a new Congregation, their resolutions concerning the manner of explaining **Rule 3, of Chap. I, Section I, Part VII**<sup>236</sup>: *In our Churches, there will not be had funerals, nor funeral services, or anniversaries, nor chaplaincies, nor anything similar.*

When their resolutions had been presented and read, the Congregation was asked if it admitted the explanations that were given, with the condition that they be formulated in the manner of an authentic interpretation.

The question was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 16 |
| No     | -  |

The explanations of the Commission were accepted, with the condition that they be formulated.

---

The Congregation was asked whether the **IInd General Congregation** in approving the *Appendix*, by attributing to the General Councilors the decisive vote in some cases, had derogated from the **Constitutions of the Founder, Part XII, Chap. I**<sup>237</sup>?

A Vote was taken, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 10 |
| No     | 6  |

THEREFORE, IT WAS RETAINED THAT A DEROGATION HAD TAKEN PLACE  
[Session suspended]

---

When the Session was resumed, Fr. Vicentini was authorized to make one of his motions, which was of this tenor: Having seen the work, and the accurate study that would be required for the treatment of the matter indicated at this point, according to the List, namely, the examination of all those points of the *Appendix* in which there is required the decisive vote of the General Councilors, to save time, and even more, to have a more thorough and calm examination of the matter, that all this section be entrusted to a Commission to be created for this purpose by the capitulars.

The motion was well received by the entire Chapter, which, as a consequence, admitted a vote on the following part:

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<sup>236</sup> CF # 92.

<sup>237</sup> CF ## 298-307 – all copied *verbatim*, from Suarez, o.c., pp. 1067, *passim*

Is there to be instituted a Commission that will study and report to the next General Chapter, on the above-mentioned matter? – The Chapter, rather than taking a secret vote, **preferred to vote orally, as it did, and was unanimously in favor of the proposed Commission.**

From this decision, this question followed spontaneously: how many members ought to make up this Commission? – The unanimous response was that there should be 5 [five].

Then, the Nomination of these five was taken up, by secret ballot.

The ballots were distributed, and collected, and the numbers that each received were: Fr. Mark Bassi, with 15 votes – Fr. Louis Morando, with 12 votes – Fr. Dominic Vicentini, with 12 votes – Fr. Richard Tabarelli, with 11 votes – the Very Rev. Superior, Peter Vignola, with 9 votes.

Now, according to the understanding unanimously had in the Chapter, since the Very Rev. Fr. Superior is found among those elected, he will assume the Presidency of the elected Commission.

This Commission will have as a mandate to draw up a project of revision of the points mentioned above, as well as of the others that will be determined, on a list drawn up for this purpose, and included with these present Minutes.

Then the Proposal came up, with which it was asked whether by now the circumstances had changed, to return to the **Constitution of the Ven. Founder**<sup>238</sup>, and confirmed by the *Appendix*, regarding the Election of the Superior General for life? On this, the Congregation was asked whether it believed it would pronounce itself immediately, maintaining that if such a pronouncement is not forthcoming, it would have to pronounce itself in the next General Chapter?

The question was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 9  |
| No     | 7  |

IT WAS ADMITTED THAT THE PROPOSAL IS TO BE DISCUSSED IMMEDIATELY.

In the course of the discussion, it was pointed out how the *Appendix*, in declaring that it departed only for that one time, from the Norm established by the Founder, that the Superior be elected for life, left the Congregation free to do what it judged best for the subsequent Election of the Superior. Now, though, the exception made by the *Appendix* has ceased; therefore, the text of the Founder remains in force, nor will it be departed from, unless reasons are forthcoming that would so dictate.

This observation was taken as a Proposal to be voted upon, whether this was agreeable, or not? – It was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 16 |
| No     | -  |

<sup>238</sup> *Compendium Rude*, CF # 8.







**The 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 1880**  
**II<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent**  
**VI<sup>th</sup> Session**

On this day, at 4:30 p.m., the Session was opened as usual, and took up the matter of the Election of the examiners, and the Congregation was asked if it approved that the Commission established for the revision of the *Appendix*, should study whether, concerning the Election of the Examiners, it should stand by the disposition of the *Appendix*, i.e., whether they have a three year term, or rather, should it abide by the Decree of the S. Congregation, on the State of Regulars, *Regulari Disciplinae*, which states that they remain in office until a new Congregation?

This was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 16 |
| No     | -- |

Therefore, as the Very Rev. Superior had proposed whether the number of the Examiners for the First and Second Scrutinies should be increased, the Congregation by a large majority, pronounced itself in favor of the Proposal [# 2, of the Proposals, and under n. 6 of the List]. As a consequence, the Congregation was asked up to what number should the increase be?

The ballots were distributed, and collected, and the numbers on each one were read, and the result was

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| Voting           | 16      |
| The number 6 had | 8 votes |
| The number 5 had | 7 votes |
| The number 4 had | 1 vote. |

THEREFORE: THE INCREASE OF THE EXAMINERS WILL BE BROUGHT TO 6  
 [SIX].

Then, there was taken up the Nomination of the Examiners for the First Scrutiny. The ballots were distributed, and collected, and the number received by each was read, and the following were elected:

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Fr. Tabarelli       | with 11 votes. |
| Fr. Alexis Magagna  | with 10 votes. |
| Fr. Andrew Sterza   | with 10 votes. |
| Fr. Melchior Vivari | with 8 votes.  |
| Fr. Pio Gurisatti   | with 7 votes.  |
| Fr. Peter Beltrami  | with 6 votes.  |

Then, the Nomination of the Examiners for the Second Scrutiny was taken up. The ballots were distributed, and gathered, and the numbers received by each one were read, and the following were elected:

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Fr. Francis Benciolini | with 15 votes. |
| Fr. Joseph Sembianti   | with 15 votes. |
| Fr. John Rigoni        | with 14 votes. |



THEREFORE: THE HOUSE OF BASSANO IS TO BE RETAINED, AND STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE IT.

---

Proposal n. 12 under n. 7 of the list came under discussion: **whether a public high school should be established at the Stimmate?**

The Proponents, having observed that the **Vth General Congregation** had thought sufficiently of this institution, on the occasion of an analogous Proposal on the part of the House of the Stimmate, and reflecting further that it would be impossible that such erection take place in the time before the next General Congregation, they withdrew their proposal, putting off to another time, placing this under consideration <sup>241</sup>.

The Proposal [n. 13, under n. 7 of the List], whether there is to be excluded from our schools the Ist inferior elementary classes, and it was unanimously agreed on this thought, manifestly religious.

---

Then, the Proposal [n. 7, under n. 7 of the List] was taken up: whether the Rules of the particular Offices are to be reviewed?

When a discussion had been held on this, this proposition was formulated: The care is remitted to the Very rev. Superior to make, either by himself, or through others, of his choice, the revision of said Rules, to be submitted then to the approval of the Congregation; whether this is agreeable, or not? – this was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
| Yes    | 16 |
| No     | -- |

---

Regarding the proposal: whether to observe [n. 9 under n. 7 of the List] the Pontifical Constitutions during the Novitiate, the Congregation recommends to whomsoever has the responsibility, that with every diligence and care, they be maintained in so far as is possible.

---

To the Proposal [n. 21 under n. 7 of the List], whether the Third Year of Probation <sup>242</sup> should be put into effect, there was united this other one [ n. 25 under n. 11 of the List], that the **Grade** be conferred with solemnity; and it seemed to the Congregation that this was fitting, with a reservation as to a vote, in that scarcely the circumstances and the number of subjects, that is now relatively small, will allow to have this Third Year of Probation, that would be as a preparation for the conferral of the **Grade**<sup>243</sup>, for which a certain solemnity would be agreeable.

This was put to a vote, to see if all agreed with this thought, and the result was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 16 |
|--------|----|

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<sup>241</sup> **NB** as has been pointed out, the return to **teaching school** was one of the *principal ends* [one of the *varia et propria ministerial*] of the Apostolic Missionaries, is here tabled for lack of time – with a new General Chapter being expected for the next year.

<sup>242</sup> **CF # 152 – after studies have been completed.**

<sup>243</sup> It seems clear from this that this IIIrd Year of Probation would be asked of the candidates for the **Grade**, and before its conferral.



[next day]

**This morning, the 24<sup>th</sup> of February**, there was reconvened in the usual manner, the VIIth Session, interrupted last evening, and there was taken up precisely Proposal n. 20, under n. 8 of the List, whether the Councilors of each Director should be more than a name – It was pointed out that as the Proposal is too clear in itself, and has no need of discussion, so the Congregation went ahead.

Here, the absence of Fr. Peter Beltrami is noted, who will be delayed for a short while.

Proposal n. 30 under n. 8 of the List followed: Whether the time should be fixed for the Official to give an account to the respective Superiors.

Account will be taken of this Proposal, in the Rules of the particular Offices to be reviewed.

At this point, Fr. Peter Beltrami took his place.

The Congregation went on to Proposal n. 32, under n. 8, of the List: whether the Rule is observed of applying the Novices to lowly offices <sup>246</sup>.

The Rule is most wise, and holy, and it is to be kept.

Regarding the second part of the same No., in which it is asked: whether, and what conditions are imposed, or proposed on the Novices, when they are professed?

He Congregation responds that this be regulated, more or less, according to what is prescribed in the *Appendix*, Chap. I, Parag. 8, n. 5.

At this point, it was asked what are the **Formula of Vows** and the **Promise for Profession**?

Unanimously, the following Formula was adopted:

**I, ..., although most unworthy, though trusting in divine pity and mercy, before the Blessed and always Immaculate Virgin Mary, and her most chaste Spouse, Joseph, and before the entire heavenly Court, VOW and PROMISE to Almighty God, and to you, Very Reverend Father General, Superior of the Apostolic Missionaries, taking the place of God <sup>247</sup>, as well as your successors [if the one receiving the Vows is the Vicar, or one specially delegated by him, there will be said: *and through you, to the Very Rev. Father General, Superior of the Apostolic Missionaries, taking the place of God, as well as to his successors* ], Perpetual Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, according to what is contained in our Constitutions.**

**Then, the Superior says: *And if you observe these things, I promise you eternal life.***

**Then, the one making the Vows, if he is a student, adds:**

<sup>246</sup> CF # 36.

<sup>247</sup> CF # 139 – *as Christ*.

*And further, I promise that I will receive the more perfect and more stable Grade<sup>248</sup>, according to the judgment of the Superior, as to what he will deem for the greater service of God.*

The Coadjutor Brothers will recite the Formula of Profession in their native language.

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With Proposal n. 38 under Rule 8 of the List, there was asked an explanation of **Rule 3, of Chap. VI, Part IX** <sup>249</sup>: *While some are sent...*

When he had understood from the Congregation, the spirit of the indicated Rule, the Proponent [Fr. Sembianti] said he was satisfied.

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With Proposition n. 37, n. 8, there was also asked an explanation of the **Rule 9, Chap. VI, Part IV** <sup>250</sup>: *Also Chairs...*

The Congregation explained that those words *without contradiction, or deception...* etc., refer to the verb: *if they are offered*, and not to the subject, who is supposed always to be disposed to render obedience to the Superior, clearly in conformity with what the Founder states in other places, as: *Going anywhere in the Diocese and the world* <sup>251</sup>.

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Proposal n. 44, under n. 8 of the List, was discussed, whether there should be established a stable plan on the religious, literary education of the Aspirants.

For the part which pertains to their literary education, this will be the responsibility of the Commission, for the Plan of Studies, to make provision for it.

For the religious education, the Director of the House, with the Master of Novices, and with the Prefect of Studies, will provide for it.

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On the Proposal of Fr. Mark Bassi, that there be an investigation on the spirit of the entire body, *so that defects might be corrected, and upright conduct be praised* <sup>252</sup>, and that this be done in every General Congregation, it was determined that this be studied more minutely, and that a norm be sought to translate into practice, also in the General Congregations, this **Rule of the Founder, [Part XII, n. 3]**, to have a report ready on this by the next General Congregation: this responsibility was entrusted especially to the Proponent.

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On the Proposal of the same Fr. Bassi, that the Novices for the first year of Novitiate, be absolutely free from every literary exercise; by a great majority, the Congregation established that the Novice, at least in the first year of the Novitiate, will attend to the exercises of piety and virtue, free from every regular course of studies, and that he will not be occupied in study, except for what is necessary to maintain what he

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<sup>248</sup> The 'Grade' is variously legislated by Fr. Bertoni: one of greater perfection stability [CF # 89]; remain in the Grade received [CF # 77].

<sup>249</sup> C.D.B., P. IX, c. 6, n. 3 = CF # 184 – this *gratis* is an important dimension of the Apostolic Mission: cf. also CF ## 3; 67; 102. cf. Jesuit *Formula*, n. 1.

<sup>250</sup> C.D.B., P. IV, c. 6, # 9 = CF # 67 – taken *verbatim* from Suarez, Bk 5, c. 4, n. 9 –p. 822 b.

<sup>251</sup> CF # 5; cf. CF # 193, a reference to confreres of other countries.

<sup>252</sup> CF # 300 – taken *verbatim*, from Suarez, Bk 10, c. 1, n. 8 – p. 1060 b.

has already learned, with the observation that even in this, the school matters redound to the spirit and always under the immediate direction of the Master of Novices.

/ For a legitimate reason, Fr. Marini is absent./

Having heard Proposal n. 9 of the List, and the relative explanations, the Director of the House of Parma <sup>253</sup> understood how he was to act, and thanked the Congregation for the explanations given.

The Minutes were read and signed.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.  
 Fr. Francis Benciolini  
 Fr. Vincent Vignola  
 Fr. Joseph Sembianti  
 Fr. Mark Bassi  
 Fr. John Rigoni  
 Fr. Charles Zara  
 Fr. Louis Morando  
 Fr. Peter Beltrami  
 Fr. Andrew Sterza  
 Fr. Pio Gurisatti  
 Fr. Bellino Carrara  
 Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani  
 Fr. Richard Tabarelli  
 Fr. Dominic Vicentini, Secretary

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[afternoon of the same day]

**The 24<sup>th</sup> of February 1880**  
**VIIIth Session**

**On the afternoon of this day**, there was opened in the customary manner, the VIIIth Session, that began with the discussion of Proposal n. 10 of the List, that negotiations be undertaken for a superior approbation of our Rules; may and good reasons were hard to support this Proposal, and various ways to actuate the general desire. That which seemed most feasible, in the present circumstances, was to begin the matter, by drawing up a **Compendium of our Rules**, to be presented before all, to His Eminence, the Cardinal of Verona <sup>254</sup>, that when they are supported and approved by him, they might then be sent on to the competent Ecclesiastical Authorities. – The question was asked if this was agreeable? – It was put to a vote, the result of which was:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 15 |
| Yes    | 15 |
| No     | -- |

IT WAS AGREEABLE TO ALL <sup>255</sup>.

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<sup>253</sup> Fr. Vincent Vignola was the Superior of Parma.

<sup>254</sup> His Eminence, Cardinal Luigi di Canossa.

<sup>255</sup> This is the important step of seeking juridical Church approval.





Then came Proposition n. 18 of the List to make an allotment to the House of the Stimmate.

As the Procurator General, Fr. Marini, was absent, from whom come clarification of the Proposal could have been heard in this regard, it was put off to be discussed on his return this afternoon.

Likewise, for the same reason, the following proposition, n. 16, of the List, was put off until this afternoon, concerning the communication of the economic state of the Houses.

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There was exposed Proposal 17, that the Friday services at the Stimmate, etc., might be modified.

It was pointed out that this matter was entirely within the competence of the Superior, and that it pertained to him to make those provisions, as he thought best. However, the desire was expressed that this devout exercise be carried out in such a way that would be the most fitting, even introducing into it, if he saw fit, some changes – to the second part of the Proposal, it was decided to set it aside, for the same reason as above.

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There is noted the absence of Fr. John Rigoni.

The List of Matters was read, that had been entrusted to the study of the Commission, and it was approved; there was added also the following resolution: On the basis of the voting of Session II, of the **Present General Congregation**, regarding the revision of the *Appendix*, and taking into consideration the misunderstandings that could arise, the Chapter was asked whether it wished to authorize the Commission, to review the *Appendix*, not only on the specific points, but also on others that it might seem better to reconsider, and to put it in harmony with the rest. The Congregation, by secret ballot, responded by Yea and Nay, with the following result:

|        |    |
|--------|----|
| Voting | 14 |
| Yes    | 14 |
| No     | -- |

THEREFORE: THE COMMISSION IS AUTHORIZED AS ABOVE <sup>258</sup>.

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[afternoon session?]

Fr. John Rigoni and Fr. James Marini returned.

Therefore, the Proposal of n. 15 of the List was taken up again, that of making an allotment for the House of the Stimmate, and it was concluded that this had already been sufficiently been provided for in the **VIIth General Congregation, Session III, n. 9**; and that on the basis of these dispositions, the Superior, with the Director and the Procurator General, reach an understanding, and so provide.

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<sup>258</sup> It seems that the February 25<sup>th</sup> morning session ended right here, without so much as a note – one reason being that Frs. Rigoni and Marini suddenly reappear in the following section – it is possible that this section below is the record of the afternoon Session.

Proposition n. 16 of the List also returned into discussion, that there will be given a communication of the economic state of the Houses, etc.

Following this Proposal, it was asked whether the dispositions from the *Appendix* suffice, i.e., that all the Directors of the Houses render a quarterly and annual report to the Superior General, on their economic state, without establishing that this account be made also in every General Congregation? This was put to a vote, and the result was:

|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| Voting [two abstained] | 14 |
| Yes                    | 7  |
| No                     | 7  |

Another Proposal was made, whether the Superior General should make known annually the economic state of the Congregation to his General Councilors?

This Proposal was put to a vote, and the result was:

|        |                    |
|--------|--------------------|
| Voting | 14 [one abstained] |
| Yes    | 11                 |
| No     | 4                  |

THEREFORE: THE CONGREGATION RETAINS THAT THE SUPERIOR MUST MAKE KNOWN ANNUALLY TO THE GENERAL COUNCILORS, THE ECONOMIC STATE OF THE CONGREGATION.

The Minutes were read, and signed, and the **IXth General Congregation** was declared closed:

- Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup. Gen.
- Fr. Francis Benciolini
- Fr. Vincent Vignola
- Fr. Joseph Sembianti
- Fr. Mark Bassi
- Fr. John Rigoni
- Fr. Charles Zara
- Fr. Louis Morando
- Fr. Peter Beltrami
- Fr. Andrew Sterza
- Fr. Pio Gurisatti
- Fr. James Marini
- Fr. Bellino Carrara
- Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani
- Fr. Richard Tabarelli

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So it is Fr. Dominic Vicentini  
Secretary of the Congregation.

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**A LIST OF THOSE HAVING THE GRADE <sup>259</sup>**

|     |      |     |                       |    |
|-----|------|-----|-----------------------|----|
| 1.  | Rev. | Fr. | Peter Vignola         | 1  |
| 3.  |      | Fr. | Francis Benciolini    | 2  |
| 4.  |      | Fr. | Vincent Vignola       | 3  |
| 2.  |      | Fr. | John Rigoni           | 6  |
| 5.  |      | Fr. | Joseph Sembianti      | 4  |
| 6.  |      | Fr. | Mark Bassi            | 5  |
| 7.  |      | Fr. | Charles Zara          | 7  |
| 8.  |      | Fr. | Louis Morando         | 8  |
| 9.  |      | Fr. | Peter Beltrami        | 9  |
| 10. |      | Fr. | Dminic Vicentini      | 10 |
| 11. |      | Fr. | Andrew Sterza         | 11 |
| 12. |      | Fr. | Pio Gurisatti         | 12 |
| 13. |      | Fr. | James Marini          | 13 |
| 14. |      | Fr. | Bellino Carrara       | 14 |
| 15. |      | Fr. | Bartholomew Perazzani | 15 |
| 16. |      | Fr. | Richard Tabarelli     | 16 |

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<sup>259</sup> Facing what is 'p. 40' of the Original Chapter Minutes notebook appears this List of the *Patres Graduati*, the *Professed*. [cf. Part IX of the *Original Constitutions*, CF ## 158-186.]

**A LIST OF THE MANNERS THAT ARE TO BE STUDIED BY THE  
COMMISSION, ELECTED BY THE IX<sup>th</sup> GENERAL CONGREGATION,  
IN THE IV<sup>th</sup> SESSION, THE 20<sup>th</sup> OF FEBRUARY, 1880<sup>260</sup>.**

- 1.] A special revision of all those points of the *Appendix to the XII<sup>th</sup> Part* of our *Constitutions*, where the decisive vote is attributed to the Councilors.
- 2.] What are the Fundamental, and Substantial Rules of our Congregation?
- 3.] The Commission is entrusted with formulating the explanations given for the Rule: *In our Churches, there shall not be ad funerals...* [Rule 3, Chap, I, Sect. I, Part VII]<sup>261</sup>.
- 4.] It will study whether concerning the Election of the examiners, there ought to remain the disposition from the *Appendix*, i.e., that they have a three year term, according to the Decree of the S. Congregation on the State of Religious: *Regulari Disciplinae*, which states that they will remain in office until a new Congregation.
- 5.] Whether in the Election of the Admonitor, and of the Councilors, the Superior General is to be excluded from the voting?
- 6.] Finally, the Commission is authorized even by special vote, to review the *Appendix*, not only on the points specified, but also on any others that seem proper to it, to help put it in harmony with the rest.

This work must be accomplished at least two months before the next General Congregation, so that it be communicated to the two Fathers, entrusted with drawing up the *Compendium* of our *Constitutions*, as well as to all the Capitulars.

Fr. Dominic Vicentini, Secretary




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<sup>260</sup> This List was drawn up on a large piece of lined, white paper, 16 x 12 inches, that was folded to make 4 writing sides, 8 x 12 inches. The paper is included in the Folder of the **IX<sup>th</sup> General Chapter**. It was decided on **Feb. 20, 1880**, to draw up this List, and the List was discussed again, on **Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>**.

<sup>261</sup> CF # 92.

**PRINCIPAL DISPOSITIONS**  
**of the IXth General Congregation, February 1880, to be**  
**communicated to the various Houses**<sup>262</sup>

1. First of all, it was warmly recommended to the Capitulars to maintain secrecy on all that is said in the General Congregation.
2. It was decided that the Election of the Procurator General is to be the competence of the Superior General alone.
3. The powers of the Superior General were extended to him, until February 1881, when there will be held the General Congregation for the Election of the new Superior General.
4. Regarding the decisive judgment attributed in some cases by the *Appendix to Part XII of our Constitutions*, to the General Councilors, a Commission was established, of five members, which is to study the matter and refer back to the next General Congregation.
5. It was asked by some of the Chapters of the various Houses whether the Superior General was to be elected for life, and not for a limited term, as though the *Appendix* had disposed otherwise, and it was answered that both the Constitutions of the Founder, as well as the *Appendix*, speak clearly, and that he was elected for a time, only because of special circumstances, that required an exception.
6. In the place of the General Councilor, Rev. Fr. John Rigoni, who resigned, Fr. Mark Bassi was substituted.
7. The examiners, both for the First and Second Scrutiny, were increased to the number of six. The examiners of the First Scrutiny are: Fr. Richard Tabarelli, Fr. Alexis Magagna, Fr. Andrew Sterza, Fr. Melchiade Vivari, Fr. Pio Gurisatti, Fr. Peter Beltrami. The examiners of the Second Scrutiny are; Fr. Francis Benciolini, Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Fr. John Rigoni, Fr. Vincent Vignola, Fr. Louis Morando, Fr. Dominic Vicentini.
8. It was proposed by the Chapter of the House, that there be a review of the Rules of the particular Offices – the Congregation remitted the care of this to the Very Rev. Superior, to be made, either by himself, or by others of his choice, with the revision of the said rules to be submitted, then, to the approbation of the Congregation.
9. It was established that the Novices, in the first year of Novitiate, be absolutely free from the regular course of studies<sup>263</sup>.

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<sup>262</sup> There are two identical copies of the Decisions of this Chapter, that appear on large, unlined, white drawing paper, 16 and three-fourths, by 12, inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, 12 by 8 and one fourth. Fr. Vicentini wrote only on side one, and half of side two.

10. It was proposed that the holy vows be renewed every once in a while, with some solemnity. The Proposal was received with satisfaction by the Chapter, which expressed its desire that this be adopted as the practice to be carried out on the occasion of the holy Annual Retreat, in the manner that would seem the most discreet.

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**Fr. Dominic Vicentini**  
**Secretary of the IXth General Congregation**



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<sup>263</sup> Fr. Vicentini first wrote: ... *from every literary exercise* ... - but crossed it out – these corrections may have caused the 2<sup>nd</sup> copy of the same “Principal Dispositions” – but, more simply, they may have been intended for separate Stigmatine Communities.