

Congregation of the Immaculate Conception, Madurai



16th General Chapter Circular No. 1

**The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
the thoughts of his heart to all generations". (Ps33:11)**

Dear Sisters in Christ Jesus!

The grace of God helped the tiny seed which fell in the Panjampatty soil sprouted and has grown into a mighty tree spreading its roots and branches across the sea. Let us thank the Triune God. In the loving embrace of our Immaculate Mother we have walked the way in serenity and peace like a baby rests on the lap of its mother. Let us sing the immeasurable mercy of God for showering his blessings upon us in abundance.

The forth coming 16th chapter in May 2019 is another milestone in the history of CIC. This is a golden opportunity to look back and evaluate our life for the past six years; our life, mission and ministries, rise and fall. At this juncture let us look at and analyze the Indian and Tamilnadu context.

The Central Government considers something very ordinary the rape and murder of eight years old Ashifa. For 100 days the people of Tuticorin silently expressed their protest against Sterlite Factory which is a grave threat to their lives. But the State Government termed these ahimsa protesters – as violent revolutionaries and Societal enemies. Both the Governments are like the false shepherds referred in Eze 34:2 as “shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves”.

The Peace march, Dharna and Fasting and Public meetings were conducted in a peaceful way, Yet expressing their protest against Sterlite Company. The Government and the police executed their preplanned attack on the innocent people killing 13 of them and left nearly 100 with severe injuries. Many were arrested and imprisoned. All the Projects and Polices announced

by the State government is not in favour of Tamilnadu. As prophet Ezekiel, We too are now called to raise our voices against the politicians, in view of redeeming our Tamil people and land.

In the Extended council held on 03.02.2018, we decided Rev.Fr.Jebamalai Raja SJ, the Mission Superior of Chennai Mission as the Resource person to prepare us for the 16th General Chapter which will be held in May 2019. The General Team Members and the Provincials and Vice Provincials of the three Provinces met with Rev. Fr. Jebamalai Raja SJ, on 09.06.2019 and prepared ourselves in prayer and silence. Our Resource person helped us to become aware of today's realities, challenges and problems we are facing from the Central and State Governments. We also felt that the same should be shared with all the members of our Congregation. And so we planned to give the same awareness to all our sisters and also to conduct the retreat by our own sisters based on the Bible, our Constitution and the challenges we face from within the Congregation and from the outside society and Politicians.

According to CC147, the General Chapter has supreme authority over the Congregation. It is for the General Chapter to deal with all matters of importance concerning the sound tradition of our Congregation, Patrimony, the Constitutions, life and growth of the sisters in accordance with the purpose of our Founders and also to elect the Superior General and the General Councillors.

Dear Sisters!

Amidst of all the problems and challenges we face from within and without, we need to act, being faithful to the uniqueness of our Congregation and the needs of the people. Let us pray to God that we should seriously involve in different ministries. Let us pray to our heavenly Father that He may enlighten and guide us all from the beginning to the end of the Chapter. Periodically circulars will be sent to prepare us in a genuine way. Let us pray for the 16th Chapter with deep faith and trust that this chapter may be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Herewith, the list is sent, giving all the details about the groups, place, and dates. I request all of you to attend the meetings without fail and with deep faith. **From July 2nd onwards let us pray for the 16th Chapter instead of the prayer that is now prayed for the Congregation.**

“Whatever has come to be has already been named.....” (Eccl 6:10)

Dear Sisters! Let us contribute our unique share generously trusting in God's providence, protection, divine plan and accompaniment. Let the 16th Chapter become a New Pentecost in our Congregation. Like our Servant of God Augustine, let us also strive to become saints. May we all walk in the holy path of our Mother Mary to attain this holiness.

Yours in Christ

Sr. Antony Xavier CIC