



## **25<sup>th</sup> General Chapter Theme**

### ***The love of Christ impels us...* (2 Cor 5:14)**

#### ***CONVERSION, RECONCILIATION, MISSION***

**Commentary:** The apostle Paul appeals to the transforming power of Christ's death and resurrection, and by drawing out the implications of this event, emphasizes also their universal significance to the world and each individual. All believers owe their new life to Christ; we live for Him alone who alone died for us. Jesus' love for us is what impels us as it did Paul. Christ's love possesses us, impels us, drives us on. This is then the root of our apostolic zeal.

Reconciliation is what God alone accomplishes through Christ. God, through Christ, rights the relationship between all creation and God, and all creation with itself. Christ's self-emptying love is the basis of reconciliation which leads to unity. Paul's task is to make known God's reconciling activity in Christ. Paul clearly understands himself as an agent of God's ongoing reconciling work, manifested through his apostolic life and ministry. Thus, he appeals to the Corinthians to be reconciled to God, which implies reconciliation among themselves and with Paul, God's minister of reconciliation.<sup>i</sup>

#### **Rationale**

**Conversion:** The love of Christ impels us to die to sin and self, to continuous, on-going transformation and conversion, a truly Franciscan ideal. The love of Christ permeates our hearts and enables us to live a life dedicated to the Lord. The experience of Christ's love strengthens our faith, is a reason for its growth and is a grace and source of joy. The love of Christ enables us to recognize and wholeheartedly embrace the plan that God has for us.

**Reconciliation:** The love of Christ impels us to constantly renew/deepen our relationship with God, with ourselves and with others. With this perspective, we can see each other as God sees us. This is the foundation for living in unity of heart and soul; open and respectful to individual and cultural diversity; with the conviction that every person is a gift.

**Mission:** The love of Christ impels us—it widens our hearts; it allows us to see and to be open to the presence and the needs of those with whom we live and to whom we are sent. The love of Christ, accepted, makes us creative and credible witnesses. It is an invitation, an encouragement that ignites a motivation to zealously discern the contemporary challenges facing our Congregation, the Church and the World and to make every effort *to cooperate with Christ in the spiritual renewal of the world* and to *Respond in Love*.

---

<sup>i</sup> Adapted from the New Collegeville Bible Commentary, *First and Second Corinthians*, Maria A. Pascuzzi, Vol.7. Liturgical Press, 2005, pp.116-118.