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*"We can't row the canoe fast with one paddle"
(African proverb)*

Coords-Link, December 31, 2008

Dear fellow coordinators,

The Zonal Assembly of 2008 has established a calendar where many of the Workshops and Meetings were scheduled for 2009. A copy of it was published in the December issue of the *Arnoldus Nota*. However in the past months we knew that the World Economic crises have already affected many countries including those who have been helping considerably the Society. The Generalate has also written a letter of the eventual difficulties of having funds to subsidize our budgets. That is why, in the beginning of December I asked Fr. General two questions concerning the Programme of the Zone on meetings. First, may we realize our programme as planned? Second, should our Regions and Missions send their representatives taking into consideration the number of confreres and their financial capabilities?

Here are the answers of the Generalate which I prefer to quote verbatim (ZON 5b-082725):

"As to the idea of postponing Zonal area meetings, we are in agreement that it might be good to postpone what can be postponed. However, those events that have already been planned and for which tickets have been purchased should be kept on the calendar. The same would be true if the subject of the planned meeting is very important. Those things should remain on the schedule and go ahead as planned. Some discernment and the recognition of priorities is required in the process."

"In principle, regions and missions, especially the smaller ones, are not expected to be in a position to be able to appoint all of the officials of the Society as a province is required to do. That's precisely why they have a special status. They are therefore not expected to send representatives to all of the zonal meetings although their presence at the Zonal Assembly of Provincials is very much encouraged. Those which already have enough can appoint people if they so wish, but it is not required."

In principle therefore the Workshops and Meetings for 2009 are not automatically dropped despite our present situation. Nevertheless we are asked to discern and to consider our priorities. In the next UPDATE I will be consulting you closely on these matters and keep you abreast of the developments of the programme.

In the meantime I hope that by now you have a complete list of all the provincial, regional and mission coordinators in your area. An exchange of news and opinions among coordinators is a way of uniting us and consolidating our efforts in our different domains.

As to the participation of the SVD Missions ZIM, TCD and MOZ it might be difficult to have a representative for each Area of Coordination. May each Mission see their possibilities and keep in contact with the Generalate and the Zonal Coordinator.

Fraternaly yours,

P. Xene A. Sanchez, SVD
AZC