

# **Major Superiors Meeting Rome, October 18-27, 2010**

## **REPORT 1**



**October 20, 2010**

**Dear Brothers,**

I had hoped to write earlier, but the time has been so filled with meetings and gatherings that by the time I get back to my room I am often too tired to think, let alone sit down in front of my iPad to do some writing. With the days filled, the time goes by fast and before I know it the weekend will be here and that means a bit of free time away from meetings.

Since I could not leave for Rome until Sunday I thought that I would miss the opening liturgy, but much to my surprise the Mass was held at the end of the day so all I missed was the morning session. My plane landed on time at 07:45 at Fiumicino airport. It was a pleasant trip and even though I did not sleep much (I never do) on the plane I was not overly tired. Francis Vu met me at the airport along with a Chilean SCJ, Cristiano, who was his driver. Francis intends to get a license to drive over here, but first needs a refresher course in stick shift. There are very few cars over here with an automatic transmission.

When I arrived at the house the first thing I did was unpack and take a nap. Yes, I was not too tired from the trip, but tired enough to warrant a couple of hours rest before pranzo (the main meal at 1:00 PM). The rest, plus a shower, gave me all the energy I needed to enter into the meetings.

If you are not familiar with meetings at the SCJs' Generalate, the schedule usually goes like this:

**08:15 Prayer in the hall**  
**08:30 First Session**  
**10:00 Break**  
**10:30 Second Session**  
**12:15 Liturgy in language groups**  
**13:00 Pranzo (dinner)**  
**15:30 Third Session**  
**17:00 Break**  
**17:30 Fourth Session**  
**18:50 Adoration**  
**19:30 Cena (supper)**

As I pointed out, on day one the liturgy was in the evening, but other than that this schedule is generally what we follow. Not too many years ago, but before I attended my first Roman meeting, they also worked on Saturday mornings. I am grateful that others have learned to appreciate 'il weekend' and the accepted custom now is no weekend work (at least none that is scheduled; some still have a few tasks and meetings)!

Our first two days have been spent going over the Six Year Plan developed by the General and his council over the last 18 months. It was published some time ago and shared in the provinces, regions and districts.<sup>1</sup> In the United States, John van den Hengel presented the plan when the old and new council met in July. John is a professor by trade and a good presenter. That was also evident yesterday when he spoke to the group about the inspiration behind the plan.

The time here has been split between sessions in the main hall, led by the General and/or one of his councilors, and small language groups. In our English language group the following provinces, regions and districts are represented:

**United States**  
**British-Irish**  
**Poland**  
**Austria Croatia (Region)**  
**India (District)**  
**Canada (Region)**  
**Holland**

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<sup>1</sup> You can access the plan at our province website and read an interview with Fr. General about it at: <http://www.sacredheartusa.org/news-events/embracing-the-future-through-6-year-plan/>

**At each of our sessions two questions were posed for discussion and then the small groups reported back to the large assembly. For example, yesterday afternoon we reflected on the following:**

- (1) Give your reactions to the Programmatic Letter and to the proposed priorities.**
- (2) How to promote the three priorities in your entity, continental area and in the congregation?**

**Today we move on to other topics and I'll report on them before we conclude the week on Friday afternoon. I'll end this report with a couple of more photos taken with my iPhone over the last couple of days:**



**LEFT: David Nagel, was one of three deacons at the opening liturgy. RIGHT: The view from my seat on Monday afternoon's first session.**

**Ciao from Roma,**

**Very Rev. Thomas Cassidy, SCJ  
Provincial Superior**