"IN UNITY OF LEADERSHIP THERE IS A KINGDOM OF PEACE AND CHARITY"

II° World Assembly of Guanelliani Cooperators

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"***In unity of leadership there is a kingdom of peace and charity"*** is the phrase of our Saint that we have taken as inspiration and guide for the work of our World Assembly.

UNITY OF DIRECTION represents one of the fundamental conditions for our Guanellian family to **GROW IN A HARMONIOUS AND FRUITFUL WAY**[1]. It is not simply a matter of organizational uniformity or functional coordination: it implies a **deeper convergence**, which involves **VISION, INTENTIONS, RESPONSIBILITY and SHARED SENSE OF THE JOURNEY.**[2]

When our family has a clear unity of direction, it does not proceed in fragments, nor in isolated initiatives, but moves as a **LIVING BODY IN WHICH THE DIFFERENT ENERGIES CONVERGE TOWARDS THE SAME HORIZON.**

Unity of direction arises first of all from **the CLARITY OF THE GOAL.**[3] [EOS]A community that does not know where to go will hardly be able to walk together. In fact, every shared project requires an **orientation** that is **recognized** and **internalized** by all:

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[1] *What does it mean for us to be on a path of **GROWTH?** We are not talking first of all about structures, organization, rules or activities.... We are talking above all about **relationships – making a family** ... of a living reality where we feel supported and accompanied. **What are the areas** in which this path of growth should be articulated? ..... **What future growth** for groups, provinces, national or international coordinations, the world championship? Also at a practical organizational level.*

[2] *Where do we find this **PROFOUND CONVERGENCE?** In our **identity** before in **the mission**? Do we feel called (**vocation**) to be part of the Guanellian family? To belong to a "greater world" ... the **Church**? Through Don Guanella in **Jesus**? Do we feel we are sharing a journey? What are the **signs** that tell us this?*

[3] *What makes us feel **in COMMUNION** as **one living body?** The common history? ... the sharing of the **charism**?... the **formation paths?** ... the participation in the **mission**? Do we have clarity of the **goal** of our journey? On this journey, what helps us and what weighs us down? How much can we look towards the **same horizon?** How can we **help each other**, consecrated and laity, to share this **perspective?***

not a simple formal indication, but a **PERSPECTIVE CAPABLE OF AROUSING INNER ADHESION.** When the goal is perceived as significant and common, **PERSONAL DIFFERENCES** do not become obstacles but **RICHES,** because each member contributes with his or her own sensitivity to the realization of the same design.

Next to the unity of direction is the **UNITY OF LEADERSHIP.**[4] It concerns the concrete way in which the journey is guided, animated and sustained over time. Leadership is not an exercise in domination, but a service of orientation: it is the ability **to SAFEGUARD THE COMMON DIRECTION**, to **INTERPRET SITUATIONS**, to **HARMONIZE FORCES** and to **KEEP ALIVE THE MOTIVATION** of the group. Authentic leadership does not impose the journey from the outside, but makes it possible from within, helping **everyone** to **feel an active part** of a shared process.

WALKING TOGETHER IN THE SAME DIRECTION means for us then ENTERING INTO A DYNAMIC OF CO-RESPONSIBILITY.[5] **[EOS]**It is not enough for someone to show the way: it is necessary that we all recognize ourselves as **pilgrims on the same PATH**. In this sense, unity does not coincide with rigidity, but with a living harmony. Differences of opinion, sensitivity and experience are not denied; rather, they are brought back to a **HIGHER SYNTHESIS,** in which each one contributes to the common good.

Such a shared journey also requires a **continuous WORK OF COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING.**[6] [EOS]Without **DIALOGUE,** in fact, unity of leadership risks becoming

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[4] *What do we expect from those who, at different levels, in **LEADERSHIP** roles in our association? Do we feel guided and supported? … on the way … or stopped? Who leads us **spurs** us on and **motivates us**? And are we able to do it with those who are our companions on this journey? Are we able to **walk together by harmonizing** the rhythms of our steps? How do we deal with the **socio-cultural changes** of the contexts in which we are inserted? When these become real challenges, how do we move? Can we **still maintain the leadership**?*

[5] ***Is CO-RESPONSIBILITY** a reality or still just a good intention...? In some of our realities it is more alive and concrete, in others less so. **How and where is it reality?** Are we willing to take charge of it? **To what extent**? What can we do to increase awareness of it within each of us? Perhaps starting from **concrete experiences** helps us .... **Experiences of fraternity** ... opportunities for **common service ... "cells of charity".** We are also called to be **co-responsible in the custody and narration of the charism**. How do we manage to do this? The value of **concrete personal witness** ... "Charity spreads through example"*

[6] *Are we satisfied with the **COMMUNICATION** within our group? What to do and how to train ourselves to know how to **dialogue** better. Do I know **how to listen**? Do I feel listened to? How can*

only a theoretical principle. **Sincere confrontation makes it possible** to clarify intentions, to prevent misunderstandings and **to STRENGTHEN THE SENSE OF BELONGING.**[7] [EOS]When people feel listened to and involved, common direction does not appear as an external constraint, but as a choice that arises from collective maturation.

Another fundamental dimension of walking together is **MUTUAL TRUST.**[8] Every shared journey inevitably goes through moments of difficulty, uncertainty or fatigue. In such circumstances, unity of direction and awareness of a shared journey become points of reference that prevent the dispersion of energies. **TRUST IN THE GOAL AND IN THE GUIDE** allows us to go through crises without losing the meaning and the goal of the path.

From the human and educational point of view, unity of leadership also has a **FORMATIVE VALUE**. It educates in the ability to **OVERCOME INDIVIDUALISM AND** to recognize that **PERSONAL GOOD IS DEEPLY INTERTWINED WITH THE COMMON GOOD**[9]. [EOS]Walking in the same direction means learning to **COORDINATE ONE'S OWN STEPS WITH THOSE OF OTHERS,** DEVELOPING A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, PATIENCE AND A SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION.

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*we intensify communication and the **exchange** of ideas and experiences between groups? Can modern technological tools help us in this [website, social media...]? "**digital common home ... virtual meeting place ... guardian of memory ... space for sharing ... mission tool**". And the new challenges of AI?*

*[7] Do we feel a **SENSE OF BELONGING** to our group, to the local Guanellian family where we are? Do we create **welcoming relationships** that make being together beautiful and warm? Feeling part also translates into doing one's part and this is our **personal responsibility**. Do we perceive the value and beauty of feeling part of a large **world family?** How can we make sure that belonging to this family grows? Can we think of **concrete signs/opportunities** that increase our sense of belonging? ... a logo ... a slogan ... a community celebration ... "synchronized" initiatives ... same day for the renewal of promises ... anything else? Training can certainly help us. Will it be possible to think of "**world training courses"?** How?*

*[8] Do we feel the **TRUST** of our fellow travelers? And do we give it? What helps us when it is difficult to do so? How beautiful and reassuring it is **to be able to rely on** those who love us ... as we have experienced so many times in the family. And in our **Guanellian Family**? What does it concretely mean to have an attitude of trust?*

*[9] Do we have full **AWARENESS OF THE COMMON GOOD** of our Guanellian family? Do we feel that our personal good is intertwined with him? … And when this intertwining is **difficult** or makes us **suffer**? What helps us to look beyond our individualism? To synchronize our steps with those of others?*

In this perspective, unity of direction and journey is never a definitively acquired point of arrival, but a **REALITY TO BE BUILT AND SAFEGUARDED EVERY DAY**. [EOS]It requires VIGILANCE, DISCERNMENT and WILLINGNESS TO RENEW ONESELF. Every generation, every context and every phase of community life asks us to **REINTERPRET THE COMMON DIRECTION IN THE LIGHT OF NEW CHALLENGES, WITHOUT LOSING THE ORIGINAL INSPIRATION**[10].

When unity of direction and unity of leadership meet harmoniously, a **PARTICULAR STRENGTH** is born: that of a group that knows how to proceed coherently, without wasting its energies. The journey then becomes **an EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNION AND SHARED GROWTH,** [11]in which each personal step contributes to advancing together towards the goal.

Therefore**, WALKING IN THE SAME DIRECTION DOES NOT SIMPLY MEAN MOVING IN THE SAME SPACE, BUT SHARING A MEANING.** It is the **AWARENESS OF BELONGING TO A COMMON HISTORY**, OF **PARTICIPATING IN A MISSION**[12] that goes beyond individuals and of contributing, each at his or her own pace, to the realization of a journey that belongs to everyone. It is precisely in this **CONVERGENCE OF INTENTIONS AND ACTIONS** that true unity and true walking together are manifested: not imposed uniformity, but **harmony of PERSONS WHO,** although different, **CHOOSE TO PROCEED TOGETHER TOWARDS THE SAME HORIZON.**

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[10] *That of the commitment* ***to WELCOME NEW CHALLENGES*** *by* ***redefining the common direction while safeguarding the original inspiration****. We are immersed in a world in* ***strong change*** *and* ***continuous evolution****. Are we able to read these signs and try to give original* ***and*** *creative* ***answers****? Do we get more discouraged? In some of our realities, this welcoming of new challenges already happens ... what a beautiful* ***courage****! Let's tell ourselves ... Can we think of* ***choosing together to face common challenges with our specific style****? And the* ***changing personal situations and conditions of*** *ours or our group mates ... or of those who ask us to walk the path with us? What do we need to feel "equipped" to face these challenges? How can we propose this path to the* ***new generations****? What new methods/tools should we individual?*

[11] *Cf. NOTES 1 and 3*

[12] *All together we feel called to* ***PARTICIPATE IN THE MISSION,*** *in the realization of something* ***great*** *and* ***beautiful.*** *How and how much* ***do we put ourselves at concrete service****?* ***How much does the charism of charity "warm" us****? Do we manage to* ***make ourselves*** *an assiduous and fraternal presence to those we meet? Do we go in* ***search of situations of fragility and poverty****? What could we* ***do better and more*** *on a personal, group, provincial level?*

What is this horizon for us, the Guanellian family? TO BRING ABOUT A KINGDOM OF PEACE AND CHARITY and ...?

1. GROWTH
2. DEEP CONVERGENCE
3. COMMUNION
4. CONDUCTION
5. JOINT RESPONSIBILITY
6. COMMUNICATION
7. SENSE OF BELONGING
8. TRUST
9. AWARENESS OF THE COMMON GOOD
10. EMBRACING NEW CHALLENGES
11. JOIN THE MISSION

"Philothea, the first thing to do is to look upwards, to see what God wants from you and by what paths he wants to lead you. It is more difficult to know the path that, distinguishing it, to follow it.

Every faithful soul is called by God to a degree of perfection. Sometimes he is guided to a particular state or office. You understand this and learn what you think you must perform.

But in this have much faith and conviction. Imitate the wise trafficker who sets out with firm will where he knows he can land happily. Do you feel inclined to an office? Decide to do it with clarity and then apply yourself with firm purpose.

Finally, the one who guides you is God, who speaks so vividly to your heart, who manifests himself in the person of his superiors. Come, what are you afraid of? Hurry to work.

Confer often of yourself with God. Confer with those souls whom God has given you as companions or guides. Discuss what to do and always and only about the things that touch your office.

In each day then give a step for the better. In each week give an example of some increase in virtue, and pray to God that in the course of a year you may be able to greatly benefit and in the perfection of your heart and office."

IL FONDAMENTO CATECHISMO PER LE ANIME CHE ASPIRANO A PERFEZIONE
Parte prima DEL SIMBOLO DEGLI APOSTOLI DETTO VOLGARMENTE IL CREDO
Lezione I Del Credo in generale