

To the Reverend  
Fr. João Paulino Guterres  
Superior ITM

To the Reverend  
Fr. Manuel Pinto Fernandes  
Chapter Moderator ITM

To the Members of the  
Provincial Chapter ITM

*Dear Fr. João Paulino, Fr. Manuel and Confreres,*

Hope all of you are fine. It is with great pleasure that I send you this message on the occasion of your Provincial Chapter, which takes place from the 9th to the 13th of April 2013.

The Provincial Chapter is a great gift for the life of the ITM Vice Province. The outcomes of your work will be efficacious if the entire Chapter process is conducted well. It is not primarily a matter of preparing a "formal" document to be sent in as your contribution to the GC27, but of carrying out a verification of your life that will help in the maturing and growth of your Vice Province.

Your Vice Province should be engaged already now itself in listening to the challenging questions confronting it in the matter of bearing witness through a radical way of living the Gospel, by carrying out an in-depth reading of your situation and tracing the steps needed to realize such a life witness. You do not have to postpone till after the GC27 the decision you intend to take and the concrete things you want to do. Instead, you have to start at once to live the gift offered you by the topic of the Chapter. You know in fact that *"the grace of the Spirit does not brook any delay"*.

The Chapter is a privileged time of discernment, which is a gift and a work of the Spirit. Only one who is attentive, disposed and docile to the wind and the fire of the Spirit can effect a true discernment. Your Chapter discussions require a spiritual atmosphere if you are to perceive the wind and receive the fire, for the Spirit indeed comes *"like wind and a fire"*. Your discussions also require a fraternal climate that steers clear of clashes and divisions, and listens to everyone. *"Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good"* (1 Thess. 5, 19). I wish you to be able to receive the gift of being *"mystics in the Spirit, prophets of fraternal life, and servants of the young"*.

May Mary Help of Christians sustain your work and may Don Bosco inspire your decisions.

With my cordial greetings,  
Fr Francis Cereda