

## Reflections on General Chapter 45 | Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC May 20, 2014



“I am not nervous. Thank you very much Brothers. I am not sure if I am prepared for this or not. But . . . I have had no better person to accompany me and the rest of the General Council these past 7 years than Brother Alvaro. To be in close proximity to him, his spirit, his humor, his witness . . . I am very grateful. He has been a model for the past seven years. [Standing ovation]

“I do not think there will be anymore for us at this time. . . . I can only say that with the support of a strong team—which you will put

together—I will do my best to serve the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools throughout the world.”

With these steady words, admirable considering the waves of emotion we were all experiencing in the Chapter Hall, Brother Robert Schieler opened his term as the 28<sup>th</sup> Superior General. He received the Rule and seal of the Institute from Brother Álvaro. Then we processed to the church singing, “Laudate omnes gentes, laudate dominum,” the opening of Psalm 117. Brother Robert first went to the relics of the Founder for personal prayer and then we, meaning everyone here in the Generalate, welcomed him with the traditional accolade. Brother Rodolfo pulled out all the stops and we surfed our way out on a white horse of organ music.

Spirits fairly soaring, we gathered in one of the courtyards to snap endless combinations of photos with Bob. I joined the paparazzi and added to my collection. The one above is with the youngest members of the chapter. Thank goodness for photos. They allow us to freeze moments in time, memories we will need for the harder days. I remember the intense emotions of the 44<sup>th</sup> Chapter and they have no doubt sustained Brother Álvaro and the General Council. Their service has been exceptional.

I hope the memory of this day will sustain Brother Robert in similar ways. We all recognize that no one can truly be prepared and ready to assume the awesome mantle of leadership. He will need every grace God can provide and we can offer. For now, we take great consolation in knowing that Bob will give the full measure of his devotion to this Institute and Family that he loves deeply.

Brother Timothy Coldwell, FSC