



Guanella News

Notiziario della Casa Generalizia dei Servi della Carità - Anno XXIII (II Serie) - Direzione e Redazione:
Centro di Comunicazione

The passion for human and spiritual promotion of the souls

We are a bridge for brothers and sisters who want to meet God, just as Christ is the only and essential mediator for all of us who want to experience the presence and love of the Father. (pag. 1).

Annual meeting with Provincials, Vicaris and Delegates of the Congregation

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On this day we are united with all the communities of consecrated life scattered throughout the world, pilgrims in the same land that sustains us and in which we live this history that challenges us.

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In the recently concluded meeting with Provincials, Vicars, and Delegates, the importance has been stressed to recover the value of our missionary spirit.

The passion for human and spiritual promotion of the souls

Dear Confreres ,
receive my warm and fraternal greeting at the beginning of this month of February with the occasion of the Feast of Jesus' presentation at the temple which, in many parts of the world, is also the day of prayer for Consecrated Life. Pope Benedict XVI, whom our congregation will always thank for proclaiming our Founder saint, wrote on this day: "The consecrated life, in fact, "powerfully" witnesses and expresses the reciprocal seeking of God and man, the love that attracts them to each other. The very fact of being consecrated makes the consecrated person, as it were, a "bridge" to God for all who encounter him or her a reminder, a reference point. And this is all by virtue of the mediation of Jesus Christ, the Consecrated One of the Father. He is the foundation! He who shared our weaknesses so that we might participate in his divine nature." (2 February 2010).

I always cheer the image of consecrated life as a bridge facilitating communication between God and man. We are a bridge for our brothers and sisters who want to meet God, as Christ is the only and essential mediator for all of us who want to experience God's presence and his Fatherly love.

Let us welcome pope Benedict's invitation and strengthen our relation with God, in a "powerful" manner; let us become again – if needed – men who love the Lord with passion, seek God in all ways and with all their strength, and serve the brothers and sisters at their side as a logical consequence of this love.

This is the contest I would like to introduce a theme that came up during the recent meeting with the Provincials, Vicars, and Delegates of the congregation in a strong and pressing way for our congregation. The theme is missionary spirit! You will read in the summary of our works that very meaningful and demanding words have been spoken about this. Words such as joyful availability that avoids making "contracts" for a missionary service also abroad, and that implies entering a mission with one's heart, and not only with the body, facing the unavoidable challenges of a new language, of climate, of inculturation, of new relations, of physically being detached from one's roots. When a person loves God, he will still feel the difficulty, but all these become possible.

This theme is present in our Founder's life, in our Constitutions, in the way of outlining our going on through the years as religious apostles of the Gospel of charity. The theme is also typical of the nature of the Church, sent my Christ to the whole world. A theme we have perhaps allowed to become lukewarm, diluted, when we found excuses saying, we are not missionaries "ad extra", our DNA does not include the gene of mission "ad gentes". This is partially true, we are not a missionary congregation as our first aim, evangelisation is not the primary purpose of our congregation, but surely within our spirituality, since we are in the church and part and parcel of the church, we breathe the mission, we become missionaries in all our life and deeds, rightly as religious apostles, from the charity towards the least, the abandoned and needy throughout the world.

We are also recipients of the conditions proposed by Holy Scripture about the mission of the Seventy-two, and that of the Twelve: they are the same conditions of Jesus' mission. The difference is that he is the Son who left his Father and "came" to search for his brethren. On the contrary, the Twelve are "called", the Seventy-two "designated" to cooperate to his work, and we are "chosen", desired by Christ to follow him. As this mission goes from Israel to the ends of the space, likewise it extends from Jesus to the end of time. Then the Lord will come. But "the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations" (Mk. 13:10). Those called, chosen, designated by Christ are fully and totally invested with the mission of the Lord, surely in different ways, with the creativity of charity that is always new and not repeating itself, but always faithful to the One who started it.

Don Guanella, in his motto "the whole world is your homeland, and your boundaries are the boundaries of the world" reflects exactly this principle. Charity cannot suffer boundaries; our mission has a catholic breath. Let us read again No 80 of our Constitutions: what a masterpiece! As a summary of the mission for which we exist, this text states the most lively issues for our Founder. As if trying to express our awareness that we are handling a mission "too great" to be conveniently stated, the article calls on the Founder himself, to state, with his fire, his gift, his holy heart, what were for him – and what should remain for us – the genuine intentions of the Spirit. No 80 of our constitutions is an article totally built up as a "memory" of words we already know and can spot out in thousands, loaded as they are with unique echoes. Nothing juridical in it, but it contains the main impulses that should animate us in our zeal for mission. (from the commentary No 80)

On this theme the Founder's writing are full of quotations. Our Constitutions also show plenty of references. We can quote a few: No. 4, "the charity of Christ has drawn us"; No. 14, "In all our activities we become cooperators of Christ for the Gospel"; No. 30, "Under the tutelage of Christ our elder brother we learn to do everything for the glory of God and for the salvation of the world"; No. 69, "In serving those whom the Lord reserves for our apostolic care, we imitate the fatherly love of God, who follows his children with solicitude so that they may attain the fullness of life"; No.71, "We live among the poor as educators in the faith, so that along with us they may encounter Christ".

Again, in No. 74 our Constitutions reach the top of this self-giving love when quoting the sentence from the Regulations written by the Founder in 1905: "It is necessary to give hands, mind and heart, even to make a victim of oneself for the poor of Jesus Christ, because it is written that the good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep."

In the recently concluded meeting with Provincials, Vicars, and Delegates, the importance has been stressed to recover the value of our missionary spirit. This is not a theme only for young confreres, but for all, at all ages, because the needs of our congregation in this moment are many and urgent: every kind of service, even the simplest, humble, apparently not relevant because of age, health, personal difficulties, is useful for our places of mission in the world. There is a pressing need, a dream, in our Superiors: that the heart of each one of us, Servants of Charity, be reopened to the passion for human and spiritual promotion of the souls, to the availability to offer our life, for the time allowed by our strength, in favour of others, of the needy, of the least to whom the Father sent us, entrusting to us the ministry of consolation and mercy. Let us not close up into ourselves, dear confreres, looking at our limits, at our reducing forces, at the growing age. Let us not be like Sarah, smiling about the promises that God binds to our fidelity and availability to his calls. Let all of us renew Paul's belief: "I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me" (2 Tim.1,12).

The heroic enthusiasm of our Founder who, at the beginning of his priestly journey was firmly announcing "I want to be a sword of fire in the holy ministry" (DLG, Il montanaro, Opera Omnia, Vol III, pag, 1002) and the belief, having already passed half of his journey that "we can never stop, as long as there are poor to be assisted and distresses to be relieved" (DLG, LDP 1894, pag.183), perhaps can shake us all and push us to join again the match, to give what we can of our life, of our talents, maybe almost out of breath, but with our hearts full of the joy of still being helpful for someone, supporting the building up of the kingdom of God?

May the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life this year 2023 be for us Servants of charity according to what the letter to the Hebrews tells us of Jesus: "Here I am, O Father, I come to do your will" (Eb.10,7).

Don Guanella reminds us: "Good is not of those who do much, but of those who love much! (DLG, R int F.s.C., Opera Omnia, Vol.IV, pag. 979).

P. Umberto

Roma, 2 febbraio 2023

ANNUAL MEETING WITH PROVINCIALS, VICARIS AND DELEGATES OF THE CONGREGATION

A. WHY THIS MEETING

We have reached the last meeting in Rome with Provincials and Vicars of the different zones of our congregation. Next January, 2024, we will be busy for Provincial Chapters and Delegation Assemblies or even already moving to the 21st General Chapter. The experience of this yearly meeting with you, in the recent history of our congregation, has always been present as a means of animation and governance of our Institute. In a synodal way, we have always considered pressing and delicate themes lived by our religious family at the moment. A look at the themes of the past few years is enough to see the importance of this moment: guidelines on abuses, management of our Works, re-qualification of laity, vocations and youth pastoral, our regulations, and more.

This year's meeting also has its relevant, apart from the fact of being the last of the tenure of this General Council. We have at hand issues that are relevant and urgent.

- A theme we shall consider, that we have at heart but hardly find place in programs, optimistic views for the future, practical organisation, at least in some parts of the congregation: the theme of **our young confreres**. They are few in Europe, enough or more than enough in other parts of the Guanellian world. Many, too many have left in the past decades, often with superficial reasons. Some young confreres try any nonsense to find excuses and they leave the congregation to enter pastoral life in a diocese. This has to be a question for us, and a concern. We are losing sons, and this hurts our paternity and our being a family. Even more when they also abandon the priesthood. Have we really done always what was possible, for them? Did we offer them community and involving relationship, able to give reasons and support to the renunciations required by consecrated life? Is it always all their fault?

- We shall give space to the **reviewing of our Educational Project (PEG)**. There is need to adapt it to the pedagogy and the reality of today, and a committee is working with



serious commitment on it. They will tell us what they have achieved and what is still to be done.

- We will touch the delicate theme of our **Regulations** clarifying between what was already presented in the 20th GC and what has not been presented and will need to be voted; what is added following the interventions during the past years from the Pope and the Holy See, and what the committee proposes as a new way of exposing the matters already approved.

- We will listen attentively to the description prepared by you as **image of the zone entrusted to your animation** and your governance as Province or Delegation. With this we will have first-hand knowledge, trying to enter into what your local communities and your councils feel, think, live. This is the most important and “sacred” patrimony, signed by the duty to listen, be concerned, accompany, that is proper of the general, provincial, delegation councils.

- We would like to underline particularly, seriously, with passion but also with determination, the theme of **vocations pastoral**. It is a vital theme for our congregation, even if perhaps not well understood and accepted by some. As in the western world there is demographic decrease because of the choice of not having children, it seems that even in Guanellian religious life, in some areas, we closed any animation that can have the purpose to provoke and attract young men to follow what we are living today. I don't know if it is only my feeling, that we are going back on this field because we are saddened by the few results. In other parts of the world, we are happy of how the vocations pastoral is done, or could there be need of a different impulse, maybe more updated with today culture and mentality? Let us not be attracted by numbers: it is always better to choose quality in our accompanying and forming.

- We shall also give space to a reflection on our **economy**, entering this matter, sometimes difficult and put at the end of our scale of values. Today this theme is more than ever pressing, needed and controlled and managed with care and accuracy. The criterion of the financial sustainability of a house, of a centre, must now be taken into account since the beginning of our discernment as superiors, even when for this we need to say, at least of the time, some determined and clear NO's to new openings, to throughout renovations or similar.

- In addition, we will give a look at the possible program of the coming **21st General Chapter**. It is the qualified moment of our congregation's journey, to be prepared as best as possible. With you we shall start to say: where, when, for how long it will be celebrated, and which theme will be at its centre. Later on, the General Council will make the due final choices.

Another theme we will face in our meeting is a look at our **relations**, both on animation and governance. We cannot say they have always been perfect, but perfection belongs to angels in heaven. We surely need some corrections and this meeting is also for this purpose. The good animating us is not in the results in favour of our persons, but of the congregation entrusted to us by Providence and the confreres, to lead her on the paths of God. .

B. THE YOUNG CONFRERES

“Anyone called to be a parent, pastor or guide to young people must have the farsightedness to appreciate the little flame that continues to burn, the fragile reed that is shaken but not broken (cf. Is 42:3). The ability to discern pathways where others only see walls, to recognize potential where others see only peril. That is how God the Father see things; he knows how to cherish and nurture the seeds of goodness sown in the hearts of the young. Each young person’s heart should thus be considered “holy ground”, a bearer of seeds of divine life, before which we must “take off our shoes” in order to draw near and enter more deeply into the Mystery” (Christus vivit No. 67)



Father general highlighted what he has collected during his visits to the communities and in the personal dialogues with the confreres, about the young confreres.

What do confreres of middle and advanced age think of the young ones belonging to their community?

Surely, it was only a generic exposition; not true for all, often the position of just one or two confreres or of a community. But the Superior affirmed to have reported them quite faithfully as he had heard, without ever thinking to define with these expressions our young Guanella confreres (which would surely be wrong). Highlighting what is in the hearts and thoughts of some confreres

of our communities about the young confreres is anyhow a first level of reading partially the situation present in our religious communities in the Congregation. Later the Assembly collected what, also following the point of view and direct experience of the Provincials and Delegates, could be a more realistic view of our communities, distinguished from the personal experience or situation of some confreres.

To this followed the analysis done by the Superior General. We do not publish it because it would require an accurate presentation and a particular help for the reader. During this coming year, the superior will find the way to offer material for reflection, taking the start from the observations he collected.

C. OUR LINES OF REFLECTION ABOUT THE YOUNG CONFRERES

1. The Mexican Conference of Religious acknowledged that today’s men and women – not matter their age, nationality, language, education, profession, religious creed, political affiliation – search everywhere and by all possible means a **“custom-made” religion** in which all can be accorded to different tastes. Consecrated life cannot overlook this basic structure while thinking of the young religious!

2. The load of our Works and structures. One of the major causes of uneasiness in young religious is feeling that they have been loaded with the burden of institutions that are complex in their management, with little interest for evangelisation, little space to answer new pastoral needs, scares effort to respond to today's challenge. How can we help them in this situation?

3. The Age pyramid in the congregations is almost always upside-down. The young ones feel that they are few and are supposed to carry the burden of all the difficulties of old age. Unless there is a new way of managing the activities, a new map of our presence on the territory, a reduction of the commitments, we have no perspectives for the future, no space for something new, no possible responsible taking charge of the mission; no hope for the young religious. They are not so much burdened by the passage, but rather by the stall that finds no strategy to overcome these problems, and causes pessimism.

4. Their frailty. Young people often face frailty, manifested in those who abandon religious life, often unexpectedly and with clamour, or in the ever growing need to undergo psychological treatment. The decision to abandon is often done without the formators or superiors being aware, without any type of accompaniment and discernment, therefore creating uneasiness in the environment. The facts of leaving consecrated life and of undergoing therapies seem to give strength to all the questions from society to consecrated life: what is the meaning of this life? What its future? Where does one the joy to live it?

5. The need of closeness and clarity. Our young people, feeling the weakness and frailty of being young religious in an ageing congregation, need closeness, understanding, affection, but also clarity, a way of accompanying them giving clear purposes and fixed goals to reach in their personal journey, offered by formators and superiors. Are we supporting them in this?

6. A mediocre spiritual life. "In addition to the life-giving thrust, capable of witness and self-sacrifice to the point of martyrdom, consecrated life also experiences the insidiousness of mediocrity in the spiritual life, of the progressive taking on of middle-class values and of a consumer mentality. The complex management of works, while required by new social demands and norms of the State, together with the temptations presented by efficiency and activism, run the risk of obscuring Gospel originality and of weakening spiritual motivations. The prevalence of personal projects over community endeavours can deeply corrode the communion of brotherly and sisterly love." (*Starting afresh from Christ No.12*). From this, often, comes the rejection of anything referred to renunciation and mortification. One looks for a rewarding and gratifying ministry, studies are not aimed at a more qualified mission of the congregation, but as a means of personal fulfilment, to keep up with others.

7. The treasury of one's heart. The affective and effective bond with the Lord Jesus in the congregation is today a challenge among young religious: it doesn't grow to become the centre of one's heart. We have the impression that the bond with the confreres in the congregation or with the class-mates of the formation group is stronger than that with the Lord Jesus and with the congregation in itself. But we are called to follow Jesus, like Peter, without looking at what will happen to the beloved disciple (see Jn. 21:20-22). Vocation is first of all a personal action, that cannot be transferred nor conditioned from what others may or want to do. The communion generated among us, beyond human affinities, is the fruit of our relationship with the Lord.

P. Umberto

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SUPERIORS' WORKS

We tried to summarise, in the conclusions of our meeting, some suggestions, desires, proposals that were coming from this Assembly.



1. A sentiment of thankfulness to the Lord, to the general council, and to all the confreres who came, for the experience of communion and sharing we had in these days. We have put on the table, but even more felt in our hearts, a common passion for our being Guanellian family in mission throughout the world. We have told one another real and practical stories that, once again, manifested a double common need: to be united to what is essential and not negotiable (fidelity to the Gospel lived and witnessed as consecrated men; fidelity to the Charism as specific gift and way to follow Jesus Christ “following the steps and with the spirit of Don Guanella”) and that of translating our identity and

mission in the rich variety of cultures and answering to the demands and needs of the Church and the world today.

2. A sense of joy and hope we feel within us as Guanellian *religious apostles*, living this time, in this congregation that is small, fragile, but is “born from the Heart and in order to be Heart” wherever it is; in this present Church and in this world, so openly wounded, divided, infected by many viruses, and for this cause, more than ever in need of a proposal of a different life, “going against the tide”, more liveable, possible and true, that gives the breath of new air, clean and fresh, different from the smog that chokes and kills. This fresh air, we affirmed with conviction, is only the air of the Gospel and of Charity.

3. Together with these sentiments of gratitude, joy and hope, we would not be true unless we shared also the perception that in the congregation there is also a sense of disappointment, perplexity, as if we are incapable of daring something more, to tell ourselves all the truth even when it makes us uncomfortable and calls all to a radical conversion. We as superiors have put ourselves some questions: what new and practical thing do we offer to the congregation’s confreres with this meeting? Was it just trying to analyse once more the situations? Open or silent perceptions that it is useless to believe and try any change? We are all “children of our times”, therefore we will go on following the fashions of the time? For any demand of the confreres, we just have to say “yes”, or we will risk to lose confreres, or at least underground grudges and floods of gossip? We have also wandered: “Are we raising the white flag to give up, while facing the new challenges of Guanellian vocation and mission today? Are we – first of all by example – encouraging to aim high, for the better? Or are we sitting back and giving in to conformism, doing the minimum needed, trying to find a comfortable life ... because “all are doing this way”, or with the rule “don’t bother me and I won’t bother you”?

4. Another question powerfully emerged in our meeting: naturally we are disturbed by the many who are leaving. But do we have the courage, in our meetings of formation or planning: “and I, and we? why do we remain? And how do we remain? as sons, as brothers, as co-responsible of the same project, co-workers of the same construction, even with various tasks? builder of His Kingdom, or of our kingdom?”

5. We also put our signature to the report given by Father general, starting from the important introduction, offering values taken by the Magisterium of our Pastors up to the specific theme of the young confreres. Together with him we underline with joy and gratitude the gift of the “new blood” flowing in the veins of the congregation and offers energy for the future (our young confreres). We also think that there is a pressing need not to leave pending our concerns, the negative aspects, the viruses that are progressively weakening and undermining our organism, with the risk of death if we don't help one another to identify and apply the necessary therapies. Practically, we are referring to the symptoms of illness spotted out by the superior general in his visit to the communities of the congregations and a practical situations described by Provincials and Delegates: weak sense of belonging to the congregation; excessive attachment to the family of origin that makes people incapable to make sacrifices for the community; boundless use and abuse of the means of communication, with some open addictions; self-referent and self-sufficient attitudes, egocentrism and narcissism as in adolescence; living in the house with the body, and the rest outside and everywhere; difficult adaptation to intercultural communities; scarce involvement in youth and vocations pastoral; the fear of silence, and allergy to prayerful reflection, with little interest to adoration, contemplation; an excess of activism, of care for one's image, of trying to impress others...

Conclusions... suggestions... commitments...

After all, we could say that many of our major problems are not the reduced numbers nor the growing average age, not even the lack of economic resources ... we are not starving and we will not die of hunger ... Our crisis, our illness, may be another: a crisis of faith, having lost our bearings, our direction (Jesus), a collapse of our spiritual temperature, resting in mediocrity and worldliness. My Ego replaces my God.

6. **Superiors and formators of all levels** should make a honest examen of conscience: do we offer to our confreres, not only to young ones, trustworthy examples though imperfect, as missionary disciples of the Gospel, with don Guanella's heart?

7. **Superiors and formators:** do we carefully monitor formation as it is done in the various stages, according to the Ratio and the Church teaching? And, also, are we attentive to the environment and the demands of the poor around us? Do we have the courage to propose cuttings, renunciations, sacrifice, to give a credible sign that we “have sold everything” to follow Christ, our only treasure?

8. It would be meaningful to structure **itineraries of permanent formation**, and **concrete initiatives**, capable of revitalizing our vocational response and of remedying certain forms of "dull passions", of "tired passions", and of deficiencies in the exercise of fraternity and fatherhood.

9. Furthermore, the **accumulation of assignments** on the confreres themselves should be avoided, entrusting the responsibilities also to others and to the confreres who, coming from different Provinces or Delegations, work in the Countries in which they are present.

10. The sense of unity of the Congregation has led to reaffirming the importance of collaboration between Provinces and Delegations in community, apostolic and economic sustainability. While referring to the criteria outlined by the Decree regarding transfers of confreres from one Province to another, apostolic needs and inclusion in the contexts of the Province and/or Delegation, require: to arouse – also through adhesions manifested in writing – “availability ad extra” for insertions in contexts different from those of one's own Province; promote the stabilization of confreres who work effectively in contexts of Provinces/Delegations other than that of origin.

11. **The Tutorage** programme must be re-started or strengthened, also with some coordination among provincials/delegations.

12. It could be put in practice, in view of the General Chapter, some experiences of **regency outside one's province/delegation**, to help confreres experience a more worldwide view and a larger fraternity. But the necessary condition is that the regent must be accompanied in his formation. The experience done in another cultural context may need the regency to be extended for two years? Or the theological studies in the country where the regency has been done?

13. We expect the **Superior General** to send to all the confreres a **new encouragement** for a joyful availability to missionary service abroad, avoiding “contracts”. This implies the will to make one's heart “land” in the new homeland, facing the challenges of language, inculturation, detachment for one's roots.

14. We wish to plan **online meetings**, also inter-provincial, for ongoing formation, studying together the **revised text of PEG** to faithfully apply the lines of action in the various environments.

15. We ask every province/delegation to arrive to the 21st General Chapter (2024) with some **practical journey done with Guanellian laity** (Guanellian Cooperators, GLM, Youth/Vocational Pastoral, Pious Union of St. Joseph, Volunteers). On this regard, we think it is a duty to start or re-start the school of the charism, divided by languages.

16. We dream of local communities that promptly promote the **formation courses** and charitable services of the Guanellian Cooperators and of the Guanellian lay movement; make themselves welcoming towards **young people** and available to accompany them in faith and service; also experiment with confidence new forms of community life, which include associates, spouses, diocesans, etc.

17. **Aids for formation** should be circulated online in a way that is permanently available for those who are far from Italy and don't use Italian language. We are in the second year of common formation on the theme of the “Bond of Charity”. Soon the text will be published that includes the two parts already sent with the addition of the third and last part.



18. The General Council has taken up the commitment to review the English translation of the **Comment to the Constitutions**. A review of the work already done should be sufficient.

19. The General Council should also take charge to continue giving the possibility to all confreres the experience “**sui passi di don Guanella**”, if possible before the perpetual vows. In June there will be a group for the English medium.

20. The General Council invites all Provincials/Delegates to spot out and prepare at least one confrere for the **ministry of Spiritual Direction**, a loophole that is felt in our seminaries.

21. We advise that in our community we propose some **models of authentic and holy Guanellian life** (which does not mean perfect) that we have in our past and even recent history. We need models to imitate! During the coming WTD three examples will be presented of neighbour saints: Angelica (a girl in Paraguay), Pier Paolo Conti (a volunteer in Rome) and our African seminarian Achillus Emeribe. Let us offer this meaningful text also to our people.

22. Let the **formation houses take again the use of reading the lives of saints** encouraging and close to contemporary sensitivity. For example, the story of Carlo Acutis, his being apostle of Internet; the life of brother Giovanni Vaccari and others.

Dear confreres, receive these indications and apply them to your life and mission at least in what you can achieve. Your Provincials and Delegates will offer aids and suggestions for practical community plans for all communities. Buon lavoro!

I vostri Superiori



MESSAGE FOR THE 27TH DAY OF CONSECRATED LIFE



DICASTERO

PER GLI ISTITUTI DI VITA CONSACRATA
E LE SOCIETÀ DI VITA APOSTOLICA

Vatican City, 25 January 2023

Prot. n. Sp.R. 2930/23

To all consecrated persons,

At this time when a synodal spirit is being breathed into the Church, we have the joy of celebrating on February 2nd, the feast of the Presentation, the 27th Day of Consecrated Life, with a Eucharistic Celebration in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. In the absence of the Holy Father due to his apostolic journey to the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, the celebration will be presided over by His Eminence Cardinal João Braz de Aviz. Through this day we gratefully recall the immense grace of our vocation to be “a living memorial of Jesus’ way of living and acting” (*Vita Consecrata* n. 22) and, aware that his grace is sufficient for us (cf. 2 Cor 12:9), we ask him with humility and trust, to live the gift of fidelity and the joy of perseverance.

On this day we are united with all the communities of consecrated life scattered throughout the world, pilgrims in the same land that sustains us and in which we live this history that challenges us. God continues to call us to consecrate our lives in the different forms that complement and enrich each other, and that are above all a gift for the Church. Institutes of consecrated life (religious, monastic, contemplative, secular, “new institutes”), the *Ordo virginum*, hermits and societies of apostolic life express the whole of consecrated life that translates the Gospel into a particular form of life, that knows how to read the signs of the times with the eyes of faith and that seeks to respond with dynamic fidelity (cf. VC 37) to the needs of the Church and the world.

The synodal journey has guided our previous messages, in which we emphasized communion and participation. In this message we focus on mission: “widening the tent” is an attitude at the heart of missionary action, as the title of the Working Document for the continental phase of the synod reminds us. Mission leads us to the fullness of our Christian vocation; it gives us the opportunity to return to God’s style that “is closeness, compassion, and tenderness” which is expressed in words, presence, and bonds of friendship. We cannot separate ourselves from life; it is necessary for someone to care for “the frailties and poverties of our time, healing wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God” (Pope Francis, *Beginning of the Synodal Journey*, 9 October 2021).

“Mission is the oxygen of the Christian life: it invigorates and purifies it” (Pope Francis, *General Audience*, 11 January 2023). To live mission in God’s way as consecrated persons, we need the breath of the Spirit, who oxygenates our consecration, who widens our tent, who does not allow the desire to go out and reach out to others to proclaim the Gospel fade or be eclipsed, who rekindles the missionary fire in us. He is the real protagonist of the mission and at the same time the one who maintains the freshness of our faith so that it does not wither away.

This day prompts us as consecrated persons to ask ourselves questions: do we powerfully and frequently invoke the Spirit and ask him to rekindle in our hearts a missionary fire, apostolic zeal, passion for Christ and for humanity? Are we impelled to “speak of what we have seen and heard” (1 Jn 1:3)? Do we feel a longing for Christ? Do we suffer and risk in harmony with his pastoral heart? Are we willing to “widen our tent,” to walk together? Above all, we ask ourselves: is it the Person of Jesus, his feelings, his compassion, that excites our hearts?

Always, even in recent years, consecrated sisters and brothers have taken on the same sentiments as Jesus that led them to give their lives for their sisters and brothers. On this day we celebrate their blood shed in union with Christ, which is more eloquent than any talk of mission. Alongside them is also the blood shed by the victims of war, violence, hunger and injustice.

We who touch God’s salvation day by day experience mission as a free gift to others of all that we are and have. We who “touch the sorrowful and glorious flesh of Christ in daily history” widen our tent and thus share “a destiny of hope, that unquestionable note that comes from knowing we are accompanied by the Lord.” We Christians cannot keep the Lord to ourselves: the Church’s evangelizing mission expresses its total and public involvement in the transformation of the world and the care of creation (cf. Pope Francis, *Message for World Mission Day*, 6 January 2021).

No matter where we are, if God’s Love is in our hearts, we are living our consecrated mission. This mission enlarges the space of our tent and teaches us to grow in sincere harmony, strengthening bonds, walking together, with Mary’s solicitude and her deep joy.

Together, in fellowship and participation, we are God’s Mission!

May Mary accompany us on our missionary journey.

✠ José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.
Archbishop Secretary

João Braz Card. de Aviz
Prefect

News di Congregazione

Avvenimenti di Consacrazione

- ✓ Nel Noviziato dell'Opera don Guanella in Paraguay, tre giovani seminaristi guanelliani hanno emesso **la loro prima professione tra i Servi della Carità** il 25 gennaio 2023 nella Parroquia La Piedad in Asuncion: Rafael Dario Gutierrez Corredor, Darwin Alberto Ibarra Gutiérrez e Dyego Sales Bacellar. Ringraziamo il Signore per il dono della loro vocazione ed incoraggiamo e sosteniamo questi tre chierici con la preghiera. Lo stesso giorno, nel mattino sono entrati in noviziato Eduardo Reyes Vázquez e Cristian Alfonso Perez Ortiz.
- ✓ L'**11 febbraio** emetterà la professione perpetua il chierico Victor Vinicius Mariano Amaral, nella Parrocchia Perpetuo Soccorso di Cedro, Nord Est del Brasile.
- ✓ Il **18 febbraio** verrà ordinato sacerdote il confratello diacono don Saul Morales Hernandez Bernabé nella Aldea Chapas, Nueva Santa Rosa, Guatemala.

Nella Casa del Padre

❖ Famiglia guanelliana e parenti defunti dei Confratelli

- ✓ **Suor Flora Naccarato** di Dipignano Cosenza, morta l'11 ottobre a santa Maria della Nocetta. Per diversi anni è stata nelle nostre Case maschili di Bari e di Roma Via Aurelia Antica. Il Padre generale ha scritto di lei: "Suor Flora è stata per tutti noi Servi della carità, una grande madre buona e premurosa, pronta e accorta, come Maria a Cana di Galilea, alle necessità di noi suoi fratelli. Ha servito con tanta serenità e disponibilità i nostri ragazzi nella Casa San Giuseppe, infondendo loro fiducia, gioia di essere utili e serenità perché i piccoli loro servizi erano riconosciuti e premiati da lei e da suor Maria. Grazie, suor Flora, il tuo passaggio tra noi ci ha parlato di amore e tenerezza del Padre per i suoi figli più bisognosi".
- ✓ **Suor Clelia Capizzano** della Comunità San Pio X di Roma è deceduta il 24 dicembre 2022. Era nata a Rende, Cosenza, Italia, il 1° gennaio 1933. È stata sepolta nel cimitero Prima Porta di Roma. Il 1° gennaio 2023 avrebbe compiuto 90 anni. Dopo aver servito nei suoi primi anni di vita religiosa la nostra comunità formativa di Anzano del Parco (CO) è stata trasferita in Spagna nella nostra Casa di Aguilar de Campoo prima, e poi a Madrid presso la Casa delle FSMP. Ha conosciuto molto bene Fratel Giovanni Vaccari con il quale ha molto collaborato nella cucina del nostro Centro.
- ✓ Il 25 dicembre 2022, all'età di 89 anni, si è spenta la **Sig.ra Teresa Pozzi**, sorella di Don Ernesto Pozzi a Palazzolo sull'Oglio (BS).
- ✓ **Suor Irene Setlow** della Provincia Immacolata Concezione, nata a Chicago il 16 gennaio 1930, è deceduta nella Casa Divina Provvidenza a Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, l'11 gennaio 2023. È stata sepolta nel Cimitero di Mount St. Joseph, Lake Zurich, Illinois, USA.
- ✓ **La Sig.ra Anthoniyammal** (103 anni), nonna materna del nostro confratello don Johnson Vincent, è deceduta il 15 gennaio 2023 a Kanjikode, Kerala, India.
- ✓ Il **Sig. Andrea Bianchessi** (90 anni), fratello di Don Luigi Bianchessi è deceduto il 28 gennaio 2023 a Celle Ligure (SV).
- ✓ Il nostro ospite **Alfredo Dolcini** della Casa San Giuseppe è tornato alla casa del Padre a Roma il 25.01.2023.