



Religiose di Maria Immacolata Missionarie Claretiane

Governo Generale

SG13/21

Dear sisters and brothers, welcome

This meeting, which we all wanted, is opening... What a joy! I rejoice that in spite of all the difficulties we have succeeded.

We meet "on the way" like those women who left their homes, even though it was night, and searched for Jesus, for the traces of his resurrection, to honour and celebrate him. I hope that nothing will prevent us from fully rejoicing that He is already risen; we have somehow left our homes and have come here "on the way", not to a closed cenacle, but rather an Agora (as a forum for meeting and dialogue), an open space. Here we will walk along with our people, our sisters and communities ; our works. In the encounter something new is always born.

It is a virtual space, but it is certainly a spiritual space too: because of the bonds that exist between us as sisters, in affection and in the grace of vocation; and, of course, because of the Easter environment, of a central week in the life of the Church that involves us in the encounters of Jesus with his disciples and in the missionary mystics.

We have come from a difficult time yet not ended. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you are doing, giving support and animation for the communities and for the mission during this time. Thank you because we have remained close to each other during this time. With the words of our Foundress we can say that we are *"sure and certain that God never lacks the means, neither at sea nor on land, to help the needs of his children, ... This lively faith that God has placed in our hearts makes us rest in the midst of so many troubles, because he who has all his hope in his infinite power does not remain confused (cf. Aut. MP 107)"*. We want to live out this meeting as an oasis and as an expression of mutual care in this very difficult year.

We have been preparing this encounter in meetings and communications since April last year. I was telling you in my last letter that we realised how in this special time our meeting shall be diverse. The more the reality pushes, the more we need to pause in a spirit of discernment and to renew our commitment to animate life, to sustain ourselves in mission with a sense of body. We are a little more than half way through the sexennium and we wish to revitalise this shared journey.

We feel this whole year as a big limit but both the uncertainty it brings and the difficulty it generates are not spaces unfamiliar to the power of the Spirit. It is where new energies, new creativity can best emerge because the old is passing away, isn't it? Now that we know that pretending to control what is happening is impossible. Do we want to bet on drawing from this reality a new vitality?

A lot depends on how we are disposed: I invite you to enter this meeting with an attitude of openness as if we enter into an adventure with an accomplice: in our case the best accomplice, which is the Holy

Spirit. We accept this invitation with humility because we are sure that the Spirit will animate us but we are not sure in what way he will lead us.

God manifests himself in history and our whole capacity, with all our human potentialities, wants to be attuned to rediscover where he is leading us to. We want to start from reality and let ourselves be led from consolation, from the appreciation of the strengths and values that are alive in us. From there we will go discerning where to focus our life and mission in the coming years.

We ask for the grace to be inspired by the experience of these days, to realise the possibilities of change that we are living. It will also be an opportunity to review our way of animating and governing, and to learn new tools.

And here I would like to introduce you to those who will accompany us on this journey: David McCallum SJ and Pablo Bernal. They are members of a wider team through which the Society of Jesus is promoting leadership in discernment ('discerning leadership') in the Church, responding to the request of Pope Francis to contribute to the renewal of the synodal Church. They will accompany us by facilitating, listening attentively, and orienting. In addition to them, Miriam will be with us to assist us technically and of course the translators, Giovanna, Lidia and Claudia.

May we always keep in mind during these days this dynamic of the Spirit. In Him we are all moved by the same desire to respond better to the calls of the Church, to the mission in this world, with realism of who we are, with the inspiration of who we are called to be, always renewed and accompanying each other.

We are accompanied by the communities with their prayer and concern. We are accompanied by the Founders with their spirit.

Let us pray for the fruits of this meeting.

Jolanta Kafka

Roma, 6 de abril de 2021