

JPIC MISSION OF THE CHURCH: A CALL TO THE CLARETIAN FAMILY TO LIVE AN AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The JPIC mission is a call to live authentic Christian life to ensure the coming of God's Kingdom on earth for people to experience it as a motivation to look forward to the Kingdom in heaven (Mt 6:9-15). This makes JPIC a way of life and a lifestyle that strives for justice, equity and building right relationships among yourselves and with others. This is the unifying factor in which the Claretian Family JPIC mission is to be understood, motivated by:

1. Active Faith (1 Thess 1:3 & 8): Faith is expressed through actions (James 2:1-19). The Thessalonians are models of authentic Christian faith that demonstrates how faith is transformed into good works. As Pope Paul VI stated, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers." Faith is an ongoing journey of transformation, discipleship, and relationships, where mentoring and being mentored play a crucial role. Faith must be coupled with actions that challenge injustice and promote human dignity and human rights.

2. Hard-Working Love (1Thess 1: 3): True Christian love is put in action characterized by generosity and selflessness, central to JPIC mission. It is a love that labours and toils for the benefit of others. It calls believers to self-giving, concern for the suffering, and commitment to the common good.

3. Enduring Hope (1Thess 1:3): Enduring hope is rooted in trust in God's promises. Biblical hope provides confidence and certainty in truth. It encourages boldness and compassion in sharing faith, inspiring believers to remain steadfast despite the challenges. Hope sustains the mission of JPIC, ensuring that faith and love continue to impact the world through action.

4. Prophetic Life: The JPIC mission aligns with the prophetic dimension of faith, drawing inspiration from the prophet Amos, who condemned injustice and exploitation (Amos 2:6-8, 3:10, 4:1, 5:11-12). True prophecy involves standing with the marginalized and addressing social injustices such as poverty, environmental degradation, climate change biodiversity loss and systemic oppression. Prophetic ministry integrates prayer, advocacy, and transformative social action that announces, denounces and consoles (Is 40:1-11).

The impact of the Gospel on one's life leads to visible transformation in faith and work driven by hope as shown by the Thessalonians. Is this transformation in your lives, as Claretian family consecrated in one way or another visible to people through your faith and work driven by hope?

Practicing JPIC as a Mission of Authentic Christian life: Authentic Christianity is built on three elements.

1. Image of God: Each one of us has an image of God in our mind that impacts the way we live our daily faith and Christian life. We are all children of God (1Jn 1:3) and God wants good things for everyone of God's Children. But we know that this is far from the reality and so engaging in JPIC is to make this happen. What does the practice of your faith as an authentic Christian invite you to do in this situation?

2. Love: Following Jesus is about living the two greatest commandments (Mt 22:37-39) and not about following rules, religion or keeping life in a safe haven. St Paul, the great rules keeper

found them all as rubbish when he encountered Christ that transformed his life. His obedience no longer depended on rules but motivated by love (Phil 3:7-11). What motivates your obedience in your JPIC mission and engagement? Is it by love or by rules?

3. The value of relationships: Authentic Christianity is a change of heart reflected in relationship with God, the world, ourselves, and others (Rom 12:1-21). It is not about impressing God or anybody.

FOUNDATIONS OF JUSTICE PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION MISSION

JPIC Mission is founded on three Pillars: **bible, CST and Charism.**

1. Biblical Foundation: Authentic Christian seeks to live a balanced spirituality, which is required to live the JPIC mission as a way of life for transformation laid out in Micah 6:8: to **act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly** with God. True spirituality is reflected in contemplation in actions. Overemphasizing one aspect at the expense of others leads to a distorted spirituality.

Walking humbly with God refers to a personal relationship with God where one experiences divine care and guidance in daily life, as emphasized in Isaiah 49:15-16. Spirituality is strengthened through prayer, following Jesus' example of solitude and communion with God, as in Matthew 14:23 and 26:36-44. **Religious conversion** involves realizing God's providence, leading to transformation in personal decisions and actions for the common good. The Lordship of Jesus calls for a commitment to Kingdom values (JPIC mission), as illustrated in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7, Luke 6:7-49).

Loving tenderly is centred on interpersonal relationships, including friendships, family, and community life. **Moral conversion** involves becoming other-centred, learning to trust others, and being open to relationships. It also requires active listening, attentively affirming others, and expressing love and respect because all are created in the image of God and loved by God. Loving tenderly demands vulnerability and a willingness to engage deeply with others, fostering genuine connections.

Acting justly means organizing society in a way that ensures fair distribution of wealth, power, and rights (Social Justice). Social justice calls for the creation of systems that do not discriminate against marginalized groups such as the homeless, women, children, poor nations... A true commitment to justice prioritizes the needs of the poor and advocates for systemic change and transformation. **Political conversion** is necessary to challenge societal structures that favour privileged groups. The Bible emphasizes justice for the poor and vulnerable (Is10:1-2, Amos 8:4-6, and Luke 4:18. Option for the poor is not just about serving them but also sharing in their experiences and working towards transformative justice from the ground up.

A true Christian spirituality embraces **religious, moral, and political conversion**. Walking humbly with God, loving tenderly, and acting justly must be integrated into daily life to align with biblical teachings to create a more just society.

2. The Foundation of the Catholic Social Teachings (Doctrine): The principles of CSTs are derived from scripture, Church traditions, papal encyclicals, and lived experiences of people of

faith. They provide a moral framework for understanding and addressing societal issues and guide ethical decision-making in social, economic, and political contexts. Social analysis as an essential tool is key in translating CSTs principles into action, ensuring that decisions promote justice, human dignity, and the common good. Through solidarity, stewardship, and advocacy for the vulnerable, individuals and communities can work toward a more just and equitable world. Key principles include:

1. Human Dignity and Human Rights

- Every person is created in God's image and likeness and has intrinsic value.
- Human dignity is the foundation of all CST principles.
- The Church advocates for policies that respect human rights and uphold justice.

Global inequality and decline in the quality of life and social breakdown (LS N° 43-52) affect human dignity. Every person has the right to satisfy their basic needs. Thus, access to clean water as a basic need is a fundamental human right essential for survival and the exercise of other rights. Despite its scarcity, water is often treated as a market commodity, leading to inequality. The global community has a moral obligation to ensure that the poor have access to clean water, and this can be addressed through increased funding for sanitation services (LS n° 65). Fraternity among all people is crucial in promoting human dignity. No one should face life in isolation; instead, we must foster a sense of shared humanity (FT n° 8).

2. Common Good

- Society must be structured to allow all people to thrive.
- Key elements of the common good:
 - **Respect for persons:** Recognizing human rights and contributions.
 - **Social welfare:** Providing essential services like healthcare and education.
 - **Peace and security:** Ensuring stability and protection for all.

The climate is a shared resource, and its degradation affects everyone. Scientific evidence shows that global warming is a pressing issue, with rising sea levels and extreme weather events being direct consequences. Human activity, especially fossil fuel consumption and deforestation, is a major contributor to climate change. Addressing these challenges requires changes in lifestyle, production, and consumption (LS n° 23). The idea of the common good extends to future generations. Economic crises reveal the dangers of ignoring intergenerational responsibility. Sustainable development must incorporate solidarity between generations, recognizing that the world is a gift to be shared rather than exploited for individual gain. The environment should be seen as a loan to be passed down responsibly (LS n° 159).

3. Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- Special care must be given to marginalized and impoverished groups.
- Justice demands addressing systemic inequalities.
- This principle calls for advocacy and active support for the most vulnerable.

In a world marked by social injustices, the principle of the common good calls for a preferential option for the poor. This commitment is rooted in the recognition of the dignity of the marginalized. The ethical imperative of solidarity ensures that resources are distributed justly to address systemic inequality (LS n° 158). True political charity involves prioritizing those in need, not merely managing them to maintain social order. Authentic solidarity fosters opportunities for self-expression and participation in society. Education plays a key role in

empowering individuals to shape their own futures while ensuring subsidiarity and solidarity remain integral to governance (F T n° 187).

4. Solidarity

- Recognizing the interdependence of all people.
- Upholding human dignity by addressing social inequalities.
- Rooted in the African concept of **Ubuntu**, which emphasizes community and mutual responsibility.

Solidarity is vital in shaping a just and sustainable future. Education, beginning in families, is crucial in fostering values such as love, fraternity, and social responsibility. Teachers and media professionals also play a role in nurturing these virtues (FT n° 114). The poor often exemplify solidarity in ways that modern society neglects. True solidarity transcends occasional charity; it calls for systemic change to address poverty, inequality, and lack of access to basic rights. It is a transformative force that challenges the dominance of wealth and power, offering new paths toward social justice (F T n° 116).

5. Stewardship of God's Creation

- Caring for the environment is a moral responsibility.
- The earth's resources are meant for all, and their exploitation must be just and sustainable.
- Climate change and environmental destruction disproportionately affect the poor.

Excessive anthropocentrism has led to a misguided perception of humanity's relationship with nature. A responsible approach to stewardship acknowledges human dominion over the earth as a duty of care rather than unchecked exploitation (LS n° 116). Despite growing awareness, responses to environmental degradation have been insufficient. Climate change continues to threaten human lives through its impact on health, employment, housing, and forced migration. The urgency of this crisis demands immediate and decisive action (LD n° 2). Part of our responsibility as stewards of God's creation is to ensure integral ecology as outlined in *Laudato Si* n° 137 to 155.

3. Charismatic Foundation

1. The Founding vision and Experience of Cardinal Lavignier

- **Lavignier's dream on the tomb of Saint Martin de Tours:** On November 11, 1866, Lavignier was at Tours. After a day of remembering the apostle of the Gauls, he had a dream: "It seemed to him that he was transported to an unknown country, far away, where human forms—with brown or black skins and strange languages were presented to him." The next day he returned home to Lorraine and a few days later, he received the letter of Marshal MacMahon, asking if he could propose his name to become bishop of Algiers!
- Epidemy in Algeria on his arrival there as Bishop
- Do to others what you would like them to do to you as seen in his statement "I am a human, and nothing that is human is indifferent to me, I am human, and injustice towards others revolts my heart..."

2. Context of our foundation

- Slave Trade

- Colonisation
- Invitation of the Church to expand mission territories

1. What inspired your founder or foundress to found your congregation, Institute or Group?

- a. Founding vision
- b. Founding experience
- c. Biblical foundation of his/her vision and experience

2. The Context in which your congregation, group or organisation was founded

1. What was happening at the time you were founded?
2. What kind of system, society, and structures existed at that time?
3. Are the present system, society and structures, different, the sameness, or similar to those of your founder or foundress time?
4. In the light of all this, if your founder or foundress is alive today, what will he or she say to you regarding JPIC mission?

METHODOLOGY TO ACHIEVE YOUR JPIC MISSION GOAL

Social Analysis and the Principles of Catholic Social Teachings

Social Analysis, Catholic Social Teachings (CSTs), and Social Justice are interconnected concepts that help individuals of faith understand and respond effectively to societal challenges. While they are distinct, they work together to promote a more just society

Social Analysis and its Role in CSTs

Social analysis is the process of critically examining social realities to understand their root causes and possible solutions. It is an essential tool in applying CST principles to real-world issues. This process involves:

- Identifying a problem or concern
- Understanding its causes and consequences
- Exploring possible solutions based on CSTs

According to Pope John Paul II, CST provides a framework for analysing social realities, making ethical judgments, and taking actions aligned with justice and Christian values

Practice of Social Analysis

Social analysis is the act of breaking down social realities and reconstructing them to understand systemic issues and their historical roots. It is closely linked to discernment, particularly in the Ignatian tradition, which follows the "See, Judge (discern), Act" methodology:

- **See:** Observing social realities and issues
- **Judge:** Evaluating situations based on CST principles
- **Act:** Taking concrete steps toward justice

Peter Henriot and Joe Holland emphasize that social analysis is a way for the Church to extend discernment beyond individuals to society, helping fulfil its mission of justice.

Key Elements of Social Analysis

1. **Perception and Response:** The way we perceive an issue determines our response.
2. **Interconnectedness:** Social problems are often linked (e.g., poverty, war, and displacement).

3. **A Tool, Not an End:** Social analysis is a method to diagnose societal issues and act upon them.
4. **Value-Oriented:** It is a process rooted in faith and justice, not merely an academic exercise.
5. **Faith and Justice:** Social analysis integrates faith with a commitment to social justice.

CONCLUSION

Faith that Does Justice: Our faith ought to do justice. Faith that does justice is new and it evokes the biblical prophets reminding us that the love, service or worship of God cannot be authentic unless it is linked to a strong commitment to transform personal and social structures of sin and evil (injustice) into structures and practices of grace (justice). Isaiah 58:1-14 and Micah 6: 8 described well ‘faith that does justice’. These passages on biblical justice talks about the religious observances that please God. In Isaiah, it is to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, to break every yoke, to share our bread with the hungry, to bring the homeless into our houses, to clothe the naked, and not to hide ourselves from our neighbours. In Micah, it is about religious, moral and political conversion. The Synod of Bishops on Justice in the world point to this same reality when they acclaimed that “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel (1971).

JPIC is a way of being contemplatives in action where our actions express our faith as in James 2:14-26 an honouring the poor James 2:1-13 so that the Kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven Mt 6:9-13.

JPIC is living a holistic Christian life of love, hope and justice in the world where all can live as friends in the KINGDOM as described in Isaiah 11:6-9. In this sense, JPIC is a conscious prayer and a sacred action to transform the world in the spirit of the Gospel.

JPIC is a lifestyle of an authentic Christian that corresponds to his/her faith, moral, cultural and charismatic values. It is not merely about following rules but rather embracing a relational, grace-based spirituality. For example, the widow’s offering “out of her poverty, put in everything, all she had to live on” (Mk 12:41-44), a sign of deep faith demonstrated in action.

JPIC embodies the two great commandment of love of God and of neighbour (Mt 22:37-39) implies:

- a conscious prayer and a sacred action to transform the world in the spirit of the Gospel.
- A life transformed by the Gospel, and marked by active faith, hardworking love, and enduring hope.
- integrating faith into daily life, making Christianity a practice of service, justice, love and a commitment to the dignity of all creation

While JPIC is often misunderstood, it remains a core aspect of authentic Christian faith, an underlying factor in all founding visions and experiences of all religious congregations, organisations or groups implicitly or explicitly. It is up to each congregation or group to discover the underlying JPIC vision and experience of their founder or foundress as a motivation to integrate JPIC into their lives, mission and all their ministries and apostolates.