



Journeying together

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Superiors General

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"Did not our hearts burn within us
when he spoke to us on the road..."
(Lk 24:32)



Dear sisters and brothers,

The great challenges of our world have set the Church on a journey of renewal and conversion. We do this by listening to what the Spirit of Jesus is saying to our world and to the Churches. We do it together, sisters and brothers, and with all who accompany us on the journey. From the service that has been entrusted to us, we offer you this reflection which is the fruit of listening to what the Lord is saying to each one of us in our religious family, of having shared it among ourselves and of having gathered what we have received as a fruit and a challenge to continue walking together, to continue being useful to our churches, as a religious family of the Sacred Hearts.

We invite each one of you as well as your pastoral and religious communities to go deeper into this spiritual conversation that we believe will renew us and help us to see where the Spirit of the Lord is calling us.

ALBERTO TOUTIN

What gives you joy and hope in the Congregation?

I am happy to see brothers and sisters who are joyful and generous in their dedication to the various services entrusted to them, searching with others for what the Lord wants for each one, for our Church and Congregation.



I delight to see brothers and sisters who, even in their old age or being limited by illness, hold in their prayer the faces and the yearnings of our world.

What saddens and discourages you?

It discourages me to see brothers and sisters sad, complaining, often because of the little miseries that we all have to live through in our communities, which are nothing compared to what so many people experience every day. I ask myself: where is the strength and joy of the Gospel?

What biblical passage or figure from the Congregation inspires you?

I like those passages that describe the first vocation of the disciples who had been called by Jesus, on the shore of Lake Galilee. I like their readiness to respond to Jesus because "at once" they leave their nets, their boat, their house and follow Jesus. I also like the readiness of Mary who, after the announcement of her mission, goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth where her pregnancy is the sign that nothing is impossible for God. God continues to call and it is to God that we are called to respond with generosity and promptness.

How do you dream of the Congregation in the future? What do you ask the Lord for the Congregation?

I am often reminded of the founder's vision, a multitude of men and women proclaiming the Gospel. That is to say, men and women who love the Church and who live fraternity in a simple and welcoming way, who are close to the poor who have a face, where everyone can feel loved and respected, "at home". I pray to the Lord that He may continue to love, repair and console through this family of the Sacred Hearts, that He may do so with all that we are, with our frailties and with our desires to continue to serve the Lord and His Church to the end.

PATRICIA VILLARROEL

What gives you joy and hope in the Congregation?

- I am very happy to see that there are sisters and brothers who are saints. They have lived their whole lives dedicated to others, sometimes in difficult missions far from their own country, and today they live their old age with the joy of perseverance, of mission accomplished, of fidelity, giving witness to a vocation lived to the full.

I am also happy and hopeful about the efforts being made, here and there, in search of new areas of mission and other realities to accompany, new paths for new times.

What saddens and discourages you?

I am saddened by certain community difficulties in which I perceive indifference, intolerance, and lack of fraternity that are sometimes very noticeable. I have been saddened to hear a sister say to me, "nobody wants me in the community; nobody is interested in me". I would not dare

to say that it discourages me, but I do feel sorry that we make each other suffer, and I have to admit that sometimes this is what we do.

What biblical passage or persons of the Congregation inspires you?

I had the grace of having Father Esteban Gumucio as chaplain of the Novitiate and Juniorate community. His presence among us, at the Eucharist, at the breakfast table or in the classes he gave us, was always a testimony of goodness, of joy and simplicity, of wisdom and gentleness. Today I am inspired by his words, which echo in the many books that collect his sayings, and I try to live "with my eyes fixed on Jesus" as he did.

How do you dream of the Congregation in the future? What do you ask the Lord for the Congregation?

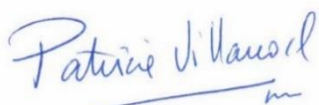
I dream of sisters, brothers and lay people who walk together, who search together, who together try out the new roads to be travelled. In these difficult times of uncertainties and doubts, we must learn to live in a state of ongoing teaching, without fear of change, trying out new routes, styles and forms. I ask the Lord to give us wisdom, creativity and courage to continue to make our future at the service of the Church and very much connected to the world of today.

◆ Patricia, what resonates most with you in Alberto's answers? What do you see in them that you consider fruitful, or a challenge or a call?

Two words resonate with me in what Alberto says. The word "promptness", which reminds me that "the poor cannot wait", and that we must always be ready and open to serve without delay, and the word "face" of those we accompany. We personalise our mission in the street and in the chapel. Our spirituality demands of us contact, closeness, a personal relationship with people, in order to be able to communicate God's love to them. It is a permanent call that the Spirit makes to us.

◆ Alberto, what resonates most with you in Patricia's answers? What do you see in them that you consider fruitful, or a challenge or a call?

What resonates with me with particular force from what Patricia has said is perhaps "the" call and "the" vocation that we have received from the Lord, which is to holiness, that is, to let God be God in our lives, and with us, to bring to fulfilment his work in us and in the world. And I am encouraged by so many religious and lay brothers and sisters who are holy in this sense: joyful, grateful, unafraid of failure and of embracing their own shadows, and above all, who choose to love people generously as they are and where they are. By responding to this vocation, we will find the "new ways" for the "new times" in which we live. And to the Lord who walks beside us and makes our hearts burn once again.



Patricia Villarroel ssc
Superior General



Alberto Toutin ssc
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