

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°42 – FEBRUARY 20TH 2017

## ***TO CELEBRATE THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD***



“Gratitude is the memory of the heart” (Lao Tse). Gratefulness to be authentic must be inspired by gratitude, this emotion that arises in response to the recognition of a good received. Gratitude is a pure, deep and powerful feeling; it is capable of transforming our attitude, our spirit and our way of understanding and accepting the reality that surrounds us.

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The whole month of January of this year, but especially the last week, has been a privileged occasion to make a grateful remembrance of the presence of God in the life and mission of our Congregation and to celebrate his fidelity and unconditional love.

The process we are experiencing as a Congregation, has called us to initiate a new stage, a new experience. But we could not start this new stage, without looking at the past and to thank it for what we have experienced. Looking at the past in a personal and communal way has meant recognizing with immense joy and gratitude the faithful presence of God in our SS.CC. life and mission. It has been a wonderful time to value, to recognize, to thank and to celebrate.

Thanks to the echoes received, it is easy to recognize and to value how each Province, Delegation and PPC has joyfully celebrated the fidelity of God in our congregational journey, looking gratefully at what has been experienced and being ready in the best way possible to begin with an open heart this new stage of the road. In this Info, some of these experiences have been collected with great joy. In the face of the future that is opening up before us, there may be many unanswered

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questions, but there is a sure truth to which we have to adhere to strongly: God remains faithful to his plan for us. The faithfulness of God is true and we have experienced it many times.

It has also been a time to evoke, to thank and to celebrate God's faithfulness with our Founders, *"We are In His hands, what God guards is well taken care of; courage and patience because everything is sorted: God is with us"* (GF). A fidelity palpable through more than 200 years of the history of our Congregation, and despite our weaknesses, inconsistencies, doubts, withdrawal... He continues to gamble on us, so that we can continue to build his Kingdom of Love, where He needs us and sends us. As St Paul says: *"If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he can not deny himself"* (2 Tim. 2:13). In our history of the Congregation, even in times of fragility and darkness, we have never lacked the faithful and merciful presence of the Lord. *"But the Lord is faithful, He will strengthen them and protect them"* (2Thes 3,3).

Celebrating the faithfulness of God in our lives, removed from from the temptation of melancholy and thinking that "any past time was better". Remembering and thanking this experience of the Love of God, leads us to keep our SS.CC. identity alive, to strengthen the unity of the religious family to which we belong, to feel part of this family and to commit ourselves to its mission. The strength that God has given to the sisters who have preceded us, to enable them to give their lives to the end, He gives also to us, to do good wherever the mission calls us, leaving God to be the protagonist and singing like Martin Valverde: *"Your faithfulness is great, your incomparable fidelity is, there is no one like You, blessed God, great is your fidelity"*.

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It is beautiful to gratefully remember so many sisters who, supported by the fidelity of the Love of God in their lives, at various moments in our congregational history, embarked on an exodus path in different directions, making possible the presence of the Congregation in places where we are now. Women courageous, bold and faithful to their vocation of reparative adoration, who with their apostolic fruitful recreated the charism wherever they were sent. This is the testimony that we have

received, and that impels us to continue being bearers of a charism that has much to contribute to the world today; *"You not only have a glorious history to remember and tell, but a great story to build. Put your eyes on the future, towards which the Spirit impels you, to continue doing great things with you"* (VC).

Remembering together and giving thanks for the journey taken gives us the opportunity to celebrate life and to receive grace and blessing. *"Mark well the way by which you have traveled"* (Jer 31:21). Marking the way and remembering it, allows us to recognize and to celebrate the fidelity of God. Our faith is strengthened by recognizing the enduring love of God for us, a love woven into the fabric of our history, *"the love of the Lord has no end, nor have His goodness been exhausted; How great is his faithfulness"* (Lam 3: 22-23).

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love of the Lord has no end, nor have His goodness been exhausted; How great is his faithfulness" (Lam 3: 22-23).

It is this new stage of the journey of the Congregation that we have begun, Jesus throws us into the adventure of a new, different, renewed life. He promises us that He will not leave us alone, that the

Spirit who came from the Father and who dwells in Him, also dwells in us. This Spirit embodies the faithfulness of God, He is our strength. *“You did not receive a spirit of slaves to incur fear. You have received the spirit as children, which allows us to exclaim: Abba!, that is: Father! This Spirit assures our spirit that we are children of God”* (Rom 8: 9-16). We are called to live according to the Spirit, to let ourselves be guided by Him and to bear fruit according to the Spirit. *“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control”* (Gal 5:22).

In the light of all that we have lived and are living, it does us good to bring to our memory and to our heart the presence of Mary. She is our model in following the Lord, her life was a faithful response to the faithfulness of God's Love. John Paul II, in delving into the Annunciation-Incarnation, said that there are four dimensions in the fidelity of Mary. Dimensions that we can make ours today:

**Search:** which leads us to ask ourselves the profound meaning of the divine plan for us and for the world.

**Acceptance:** is the acceptance, the adhesion of our whole being to the mysterious design that is revealed to us.

**Connection:** consists in adjusting one's life to the reason for our connection. It is accepting misunderstandings or tests, before allowing ruptures between what is lived and what is believed.

**Consistency:** to be consistent throughout life, in moments of joy as in painful moments.

May the certainty of God's faithfulness in our lives and in our communities be the reason that encourages us to live our vocation and consecration to the Sacred Hearts in fidelity and to be credible signs of the merciful love of God among those whom we serve daily. Let our daily history be transformed by the Lord into a true history of salvation.