

Letter of the Superior Generals

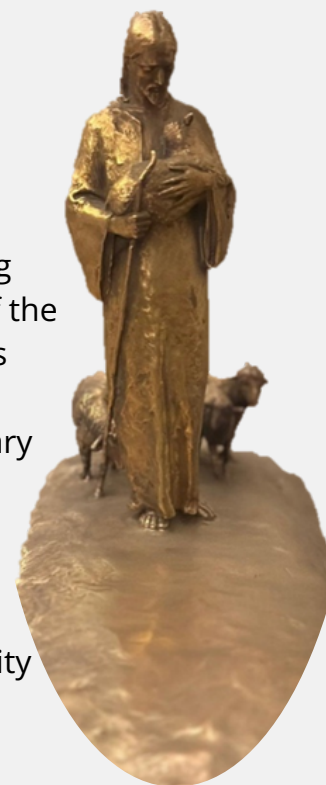


27 March 2025

“Believer and pilgrim”

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Secular Branch Members,

Our Congregation had just celebrated its 2nd General Chapter (September 1824) which was devoted to completing the pending tasks requested by the Holy See: the revision and completion of the Constitutions, the elaboration of the Ceremonial and the Offices proper to the Congregation. The approval by Rome of these documents was a matter of some urgency as they were necessary for the approval of the Congregation. In view of the delay, the Good Father wanted to go to Rome in person to speed up the approval. It so happened that in 1825, Pope Leo XII convoked a Jubilee Year with the Bull *Quod hoc ineunte* (24 May 1824). The jubilee year offered the Good Father an excellent opportunity to come to Rome. There was no lack of reasons to do so.



In the final letter of approbation of the General Chapter of 1824, the Founder notes that, while there were reasons to thank God that his work continues, there were also greater causes for concern: indocility, lukewarmness in apostolic zeal, preference for the more attractive services, seeking personal satisfaction rather than availability for the services entrusted to them, etc. Moreover, he was weighed down by the fact that the Good Mother alone carried out much of the accompaniment of the congregation and that his responsibilities had kept him too long away from the day-to-day life of the communities.

Even in Troyes, where the Good Father was Vicar General, things were not easy: there were fundamental disagreements with the bishop, Mgr de Boulogne and with Fr. Hubert, one of his vicars, regarding the place of formation of the seminarians, and about the value of a loan with interest. An unexpected setback called into question his departure for Rome. The bishop died of a sudden stroke. The Good Father, as Vicar General, was to remain in the diocese, but in his heart he felt an urgent priority to go on pilgrimage to Rome. The needs of the local Church and of the Congregation moved him to do so.

He left on 19 May 1825 and arrived in Rome on 8 June where he remained until 21 July. During his stay, the Good Father was moved by the faith of the crowds in procession to the tombs of the Apostles, Peter and Paul. He was also moved by the sight of Pope Leo XII and the cardinals washing the feet of the pilgrims, the images of the Virgin Mary on every street corner and the processions embellished by songs and candles. He himself met Pope Leo XII who blessed the Congregation. The Good Father also venerated the relics of the saints and martyrs, prayed in the catacombs and went on his knees through the holy door, together with other pilgrims, in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere.

**“He fully savored
the Christian hope
that had been animated
by faith”**

The fruits of his pilgrimage to Rome were encouraging.

The Constitutions, the Ceremonial and the proper Offices were finally approved on 27 September 1825.

In addition, the desire to extend the mission of the Congregation to wherever the Church requested it received a positive response on 15 September 1825. The Propaganda Fide entrusted the vast territory of the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) to the Congregation. The vision at La Motte was becoming a reality.

On leaving Rome, the Good Father wrote a circular letter to the sisters and brothers in which he shared with them the more personal fruits of the pilgrimage, speaking especially of his closeness to all the brothers and sisters and the renewal he made, along with the Good Mother, to care for the family they had founded.

"We have not spent a single day, and we can even say not a single hour, whether at the feet of the holy apostles, at the tombs of the holy martyrs, or in the catacombs, without having all of you present in our thoughts and hearts. And I am certain that you have never left and will never leave from there." (Circular Letter of the Good Father announcing his departure from Rome, Rome, July 19, 1825, LEBP 1055, Correspondence Vol. 6, 138).

Ultimately, his entire life as a believer, religious, pastor, and founder was revitalized through contact with the various manifestations in which faith is lived and expressed.

“He fully savored the Christian hope that had been animated by faith” (wrote his nephew, Agustin Coudrin, in the biography dedicated to his uncle, Vie de l'Abbé Coudrin, Paris 1846, 270).

Sisters, brothers and lay people, in this Jubilee Year, as believers and pilgrims, together with the People of God, let us cross the threshold of the holy doors in each of our places, accompanying our Christian communities, or together as a religious community. We do so rooted in the baptismal life that has rendered us daughters and sons of God, and sisters and brothers of Jesus. Let us allow ourselves to be moved by the sense of faith of the faithful, let us nourish our faith in the richness of its expressions. Let us set out with our eyes open, our hearts vigilant and our hands active, to bring forth gestures and initiatives of hope for peace, justice and fraternity.

May our mission be sustained by the intercession of the Good Father and the Good Mother.

Fraternally,



Patricia Villarroel ssc
Superior general



Alberto Toutin ssc
Superior General



Adoration "OPEN-HEARTED"



INTRODUCTION

On this day when we celebrate the feast of the Good Father, let us follow his advice as regards adoration. Let us remember his invitation to be silent and to direct our gaze to the Sacred Heart, which remains always open: 'a refuge of forgiveness for our faults, comfort in our sorrows, courage in our weakness, peace in our confusion and fears, and, in short, our hope at the hour of death' (Good Father).

SONG: *Jesus Have it All* (Jeremy Riddle)
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anz_4BZ1-2s)

CONTEMPLATING HIS OPEN HEART

With the help of the Gospel and the words of the Good Father, we spend time in contemplation immersing ourselves in the Heart of Jesus. Jesus' encounter with the Syrophenician woman focuses our gaze on his openness and compassion, on the heart of flesh that becomes infinite in order to welcome everyone universally.

Then Jesus went from that place and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not say a word in answer to her. His disciples came and asked him, "Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us." He said in reply, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But the woman came and did him homage, saying, "Lord, help me." He said in reply, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters." Then Jesus said to her in reply, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that hour".



"When this kind Saviour invites you to the marriage feast of the Lamb, when He opens His arms to hold you close to his Divine Heart, a heart that you consign to ignominy - I believe I hear Him say to you in the effusion of His tenderness: 'Oh you whom He has loved to death, you whom I carry in my womb, you, my dear, my beloved disciples, come and receive the precious pledge of my love, come and be satisfied at the fountain of life; come and taste how sweet I am, come and be united to me, never to be separated' " (Good Father).

SONG: *De corazón a Corazón – Esclavas del Divino Corazón*
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0g58bi2BGU>)

TO BE GROUNDED IN HIM

The Good Father invites us to rest, to build our lives, to let ourselves be transformed by his heart, which can surpass us with such immense love a love to which we sometimes have no answer.



“Let us commit our souls to the cornerstone that is the Heart of God, so that we may be affixed to it as an immutable pillar” (G.F.).



“If one is really penetrated by the tenderness of the Heart of Jesus for the salvation of humankind, can one fail to be inflamed with zeal to respond to the love of such a good Master?” (G.F.).

We ask forgiveness in Silence for all the times that we live trapped, entertained, divided, unaware, unconscious, unmoved ... by that Love which fills us with zeal.

THE MEANING OF LOVE

The Good Father painfully reminds us: “It is no longer known what the Love of God means. In such circumstances, we wish to remind people of the trust and love of Jesus Christ”. We remember the red mantle (a symbol can be placed in the chapel if we wish), which in covering us reminds us of the Love of the Heart of Jesus, who intercedes for all the failures of love in our world.

Throughout this time, we will remember the realities of our world that cry out to us:

- **Violence and armed conflicts:** Wars and conflicts in countries such as Ukraine, Palestine, Sudan, Congo and other regions. Terrorism and attacks on innocent civilians.
- **Lack of essential resources and inequality:** Millions of people live in extreme poverty while a minority holds the wealth. Lack of access to education, health and decent housing in many countries. Labour exploitation and child labour.
- **Forced migration and refugee crisis:** Thousands of people risk their lives fleeing war, violence or misery. Discrimination and rejection of migrants and refugees in many countries.
- **Gender-based violence and child abuse:** High rates of domestic violence. Sexual exploitation and trafficking. Child abuse.
- **Lack of respect for human life and dignity:** Abandonment of the elderly and sick. Suicides and mental health crises without adequate care. Dehumanisation of people in social networks and the media.
- **Destruction of the environment:** Massive deforestation, pollution of rivers and oceans. Lack of commitment to curb climate change.
- **Culture of selfishness and indifference:** Lack of empathy for the suffering of others. Prioritising money and personal success over the common good.

SONG: *Sostener* (Cristóbal Fones sj)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzjXSHMMOjE>)

WE OFFER OURSELVES TO HIS HEART

Recalling the experience of the Good Father after his time hidden in the barn, we choose to offer our life in self-giving with him.



"All powerful God, you who choose the weakest instruments to do the greatest wonders, deign to bless these first efforts of my zeal. Deign to strengthen my faltering steps along the path you want me to follow" (G.F.).



"I prostrated myself at the foot of an oak tree not far from the house and I offered my life to God. I had become a priest with the intention of suffering everything, of sacrificing myself to the Good Lord, and, if need be, of dying in his service" (G.F.).

Let us pray together this prayer inspired by the Words of the Good Father



*Let us pray together this prayer
inspired by the Words of the Good Father:
All those worries that torment you,
the weariness that exhausts you,
the injustices that wound you and
the difficulties you face,
open before you a fountain of eternal life.
How can a Christian fear if God, ever patient,
never abandons afflicted hearts?
I will not fear suffering, for You are with me.
Your support is my strength,
your goodness is my refuge.
By your side, I will endure every trial:
hunger, danger, persecution or violence,
for nothing can separate me from your love (Rom. 8:38).
In my sorrow, I will cling to Jesus, I will unite my tears with his,
and his blood will heal my wounds, as he takes me by his hand.*

HOLY FATHER (Together)

SONG

We remember the Heart of Mary united to the Heart of Jesus in the French Song :
Merci Marie d'avoir dit oui (Mary, thank you for having said "Yes")
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVXVh2cNhKw>)