



CONGREGATIO SS. REDEMPTORIS

Superior Generalis

Rome, December 8, 2014

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
Patroness of the Congregation

Dear Confreres, Sisters, Associates and friends,

*“Before the world was made, God chose us, chose us in Christ,
to be holy and spotless, and to live through love in his presence.”* (Eph 1:3-4)

On this solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, these words from the second reading at the Eucharist remind us that this feast is not only about Mary. It is about all of us chosen by God in Christ ‘to live through love in his presence’. Under this title of the Immaculate Conception, Mary reminds all Redemptorist missionaries of God’s *copiosa redemptio*. We marvel at what God can do *with* and *in* our human nature. With Mary, we magnify the Lord and our spirits rejoice.

We have just begun the Year of Consecrated Life. The Holy Father invites us to deep gratitude for our past history, recognizing the action of the Spirit in the joys and difficulties of our story as we discern the essential elements of our charism. The Pope also urges us to live the present moment with passion. Our vows must be a concrete expression of our passionate love for Jesus, and our commitment to live the Gospel. Only in this way, can we embrace the future with hope - a hope which is based on the One in whom we have put our trust, and who chose us to live through love in his presence.

I invite you to read and reflect on Pope Francis’ Apostolic Letter: *Witnesses of Joy*. For this reason, I am attaching it to this letter, and I ask all (V) Provincial and Regional Superiors to ensure that a printed copy is also made available in each community.

We are invited to live this Year of Consecrated Life together with the whole People of God, and in the context of our local Church. In a particular way, Pope Francis urges all lay men and women associated with the Redemptorist family, and especially with our mission, to share in this time of celebration and renewal, so that we may more effectively bring the joy of the Gospel to every corner of the world.

Pope Francis has entrusted this Year of Consecrated Life to Mary, the Virgin of listening and contemplation. So it is certainly appropriate for all members of the Redemptorist family to ask her today to accompany us throughout this year.

In many (V) Provinces of the Congregation, the confreres celebrate a community renewal of vows on this feast day. Such a renewal of vows might be a meaningful, concrete action as we celebrate our Patronal feast during this Year of Consecrated Life.

As we follow Jesus the Redeemer with joy and hope, may Our Mother of Perpetual Help accompany us with love.

Your brother in the Redeemer,

Michael Brehl, C.S.R.
Michael Brehl, C.Ss.R.
Superior General

