



Roma, November 9, 2014

Prot. No. 0000 225/2014

**FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF ST. JOHN LATERAN  
FOUNDATION OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER**

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because God has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.  
The Lord sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, freedom for the oppressed,  
and to announce the Year of the Lord's Favour (Luke 4:18-19)*

Dear Confreres, Sisters, Lay Missionaries and Friends,

1. On this feast which marks the foundation day of our Congregation, we are celebrating the official close of the Year for the Promotion of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation. It has truly been the Year of the Lord's Favour. This special year began on August 1, 2013 following the celebration of the World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro. It has been marked by an extraordinary spirit of creativity and energy throughout the Congregation. This energy must continue as we further develop the initiatives already begun in order to renew, deepen and promote our Redemptorist Missionary vocation.
2. Let me begin this letter by recalling some of the events and initiatives experienced throughout the Congregation. As part of the World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro, the Redemptorists of Brazil planned and celebrated a special Alphonsian Day at the National Shrine of Aparecida. Many Redemptorists and Lay Missionaries, accompanied by young adults from around the world participated in this Alphonsian Day and then journeyed to Rio.
3. On August 1, the feast of St. Alphonsus Liguori, the Year for the Promotion of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation was inaugurated in a joyful and solemn Eucharist at St. Alphonsus Parish in Rio de Janeiro. During this celebration, we blessed the pilgrim Triptychs of the Most Holy Redeemer, Mother of Perpetual Help and St. Alphonsus which began their pilgrimages to each Conference, Unit and Community of the Congregation during this year. These were then entrusted to the five Coordinators of the Conferences, who arranged with each Unit the schedules for visit of the Triptych.
4. The official Logo, the theme: WITNESSES AND MISSIONARIES OF REDEMPTION, and a prayer were also sent to each (V) Province, Region and Mission. It has been inspiring to see the logo and theme proudly displayed in Redemptorist Churches and communities throughout the world. It has also been our experience that most communities have prayed daily for the promotion of our Redemptorist Missionary Vocation, both in the community chapel and the public church.



5. It has been my experience that this Vocation Year has caught the imagination of the whole Congregation. In many places, Vocation Commissions have been established or renewed involving confreres, sisters and lay associates. Some Units have produced videos, and others have published bulletins, magazines, and CD's about our Missionary Vocation. The Congregation Website ([www.cssr.com](http://www.cssr.com)) and the SCALA bulletin contain news of many of these initiatives and events. Many (V) Provinces, Regions and Missions have put new efforts into Vocation promotion, with personnel, finances, retreat programs and accompaniment. Some Units have also reported an increase in the number of inquiries and candidates. We pray that this will continue!
6. As stated in my letter of November 9, 2013, this Year for the Promotion of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation has two specific objectives: on the one hand, to promote our vocation and invite others to join us as witnesses and missionaries of Redemption; and also to invite all of us to renew and deepen the Missionary Vocation we have received so that we may live it more joyfully and faithfully.
7. To assist us in this task of renewal, the General Secretariat for Formation sent four different articles to the whole Congregation: *Preaching the Gospel Ever Anew* by Brendan Kelly; *The Theme of the XXIV General Chapter* by Ronald McAinsh; *The Profile of a Redemptorist Today* by Ulysses da Silva; and *Restructuring and Formation* by Serafino Fiore. The Centre for Spirituality also prepared a special issue of ONE BODY for Good Shepherd Sunday.
8. During the course of this Vocation Year, a number of other events helped us reflect on our Redemptorist Missionary Vocation. On October 13, 2013, six Spanish Redemptorist Martyrs of Cuenca were beatified, along with many others who died during the Spanish Civil War. The beatification of these brothers of ours invites us to reflect on what it can mean to be "witnesses and missionaries of Redemption" today, and to give our lives for Plentiful Redemption!
9. In November, 2013, Pope Francis gave us the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium: On the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World*. This important document on evangelization certainly speaks to the hearts of Redemptorist Missionaries throughout the world. "Mission is at once a passion for Jesus and a passion for his people" (268). "If we want to advance in the spiritual life, we must constantly be missionaries (272). "My mission of being in the heart of the people is not just a part of my life or a badge I can take off... I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world" (273). As we read and study this Exhortation, we are invited to deepen our own commitment to be 'missionary disciples' and 'spirit-filled evangelizers'. Pope Francis is certainly speaking to us and to the whole Church in words which resonate deeply with our Redemptorist Missionary Vocation.
10. Today, November 9, 2014, we officially close this year specially dedicated to the Promotion of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation. However, we must continue the process and the initiatives we have begun. For this reason, urged by the General Secretariat for Formation and





by the recommendations of many (V)Provinces, Missions and Regions, in the name of the General Government, I announce that throughout the Congregation,

**THE DAY FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE REDEMPTORIST MISSIONARY VOCATION**  
will be celebrated each year on **the Second Sunday of November.**

11. This special event should be included in the calendar for each Unit and community. In the spirit of the Vocation Year, I urge every (V)Province, Region and Mission, as well as every Community, to celebrate this day annually with events, prayer, preaching and gatherings which highlight our missionary vocation and invite others to join us in the Mission of the Redeemer to bring Good News to the abandoned and the poor.
12. We also encourage you to continue the efforts to integrate Vocation Ministry more fully into the Formation Secretariats and programs of the Conferences and of the Units. Wherever possible, interprovincial collaboration is encouraged. Vocation Commissions which involve Redemptorist missionaries, Sisters and Lay Missionaries and Associates are also an effective instrument of collaboratively promoting our Missionary Vocation.
13. Thank you for the energy and enthusiasm with which you engaged in this Vocation Year. "We are convinced that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it... A person who is not convinced, enthusiastic, certain and in love, will convince nobody" (EG 266) But persons who *are* convinced, and communities which live this conviction with enthusiasm and joy, will attract and invite others to share what they have found.
14. In a few weeks, we will begin the Year for Consecrated Life. Pope Francis is inviting all religious men and women to renew their commitment in the spirit of their Charism. For Redemptorist Missionaries and all who are connected to the Redemptorist Family, this Year for Consecrated Life will invite us to continue and deepen the process we have already begun during this Year for the Promotion of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation.
15. As we celebrate our Foundation Day, we give thanks for the gift our Redemptorist Missionary Vocation. As we follow Jesus, our Most Holy Redeemer, may our Mother of Perpetual Help accompany us. May the example and prayers of St. Alphonsus and all who have gone before us continue to give us strength and hope so that we may live the joy of the Gospel and proclaim it ever anew with power and compassion.

Your brother in the Redeemer,

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

