



## CONGREGATIO SS. REDEMPTORIS

Superior Generalis

Rome, November 6, 2021  
Memorial of the Spanish Redemptorist Martyrs of Cuenca  
Prot. N.0000 171/2021

Dear Confreres, Sisters, and Partners in Mission,

On Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate the 7<sup>th</sup> World Day of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation. In each of our Redemptorist Communities and Churches we thank God for the gift of this missionary vocation to the Congregation and pray that others will share our call. With the families of our Lay Partners, and in the monasteries and communities of the Sisters affiliated with our Redemptorist Family, we recognize and thank God for the growing understanding that we are called to share this missionary vocation together.

Brothers and Sisters, our world has recently experienced some very difficult and challenging realities. This is especially true for the most vulnerable among us, the poor, the marginalized, and the abandoned. Even as some countries and societies seem to be slowly emerging from the crisis provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic, others continue to suffer the worst of its effects, largely due to a lack of vaccines and vaccination programs. This is especially true for those countries with fewer economic resources.

Especially this year, as we listen to the Gospel passage from Mark this Sunday, we can identify with the language and words of Jesus. It seems, indeed, that the powers in heaven and earth are shaken! Jesus is talking about our world today, and our experiences this year.

This pandemic has raised the veil that sometimes covers other crises in our wounded world. We are more aware than ever of the growing threat to 'our common home': to climate, to the rainforests, to endangered species, to the very viability of life on earth. The economic differences which divide our countries and our societies into rich and poor have been accentuated. The impact of political polarization, racism, the movement of peoples (migrants, refugees, displaced persons, etc.) have grown more evident worldwide. There is a general lack of peace, educational opportunities, and an increase in pessimism, cynicism, confusion and rage.

The sexennial theme chosen in 2016 – *“Witnesses of the Redeemer in solidarity for mission in a wounded world”* – has become prophetic for us, members of the Redemptorist Family, and for all missionary-disciples who follow the Redeemer! Never have we been so aware just how wounded our world really is!

Without a doubt, this is an extraordinary missionary moment. It is a time crying out for strong witness to solidarity, to love and to the commitment to build a new global society and a renewed and healed creation based on 'fraternity and social friendship' (*Fratelli Tutti*). This is the time for our Redemptorist Missionary Vocation, for authentic and prophetic witnesses to the Redeemer!

As I write this letter, we are on the threshold of the First Phase of the 26<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, which will take place in every Conference. Together as 'one missionary body' (Cons. 2), the whole Redemptorist Family is called to dream together and to *re-imagine* our Redemptorist identity in this wounded world today. This is an important time to share our experiences, to suggest ideas and new initiatives, and to invite others to join us in this missionary vocation, both as professed Redemptorists and as lay missionaries.

With this letter, I am sending you a poster prepared by the General Formation Secretariat. As we re-imagine our Redemptorist identity, they invite us to remember that "Whoever is in Christ is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). This is the source of our hope as we re-imagine our identity – that Christ can and does make all things new. It is Christ who calls us to participate in this 'newness' through our missionary vocation.

This year, the Day of the Redemptorist Missionary Vocation coincides with the Fifth World Day of the Poor proclaimed by Pope Francis. Rather than distracting from our Redemptorist day of prayer, this happy coincidence reminds us that at the heart of our missionary vocation are the poor, the abandoned, and the marginalized. As Pope Francis reminds us in his message, the poor evangelize *us* and call *us* to conversion. In this way, we grow in fidelity to our charism and become more authentic and prophetic witnesses to the Redeemer today. This in turn will make our missionary vocation more attractive to men and women discerning their own call in life.

Please remember that the ministry of formation for mission requires finances with depend in a significant way on the collections in the Units and the contributions to the Solidarity Fund, as affirmed by the 25<sup>th</sup> General Chapter (Decision 19). It is the generosity of all which responds to the needs of so many and enables the Congregation to welcome candidates for the Congregation, as well as lay men and women who share mission with us in the Redemptorist Family.

As we celebrate our Redemptorist Missionary Vocation, together with the World Day of the Poor, may the example of Mary, our Perpetual Help, inspire us to embrace our vocation with joy. May St. Alphonsus and all our Redemptorist saints and blessed accompany us in our missionary vocation in this wounded world.

Your brother in Jesus our Redeemer,

*Michael Brehl, C.S.S.R.*

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