



## **Congregazione dei Rogazionisti**

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Rome, 22 November 2016

Forty years of the presence of the Congregation in the Philippines!

To the Most Rev. Provincial Superior  
Fr. Herman Abcede

To the Province of St. Matthew

Dearest confreres,

I would like to rejoice with you in this remembrance of the 40 years of presence of the Congregation in the Philippines. I do it in the name of the Congregation and as member of the Province to whose belongingness I profoundly feel.

It is good to remember these 40 years of life spent, from 23 November 1976. History is not just left written in books in order to be kept in the library. She is the teacher of life; in her we find the roots of our identity.

The beginning of the presence of the Congregation in the Philippines were marked by hardships and sufferings, but also by great joys. The local Churches, with their Pastors, have opened their arms to our embrace, and it was very beautiful to render support to other Institutes who in those times have had the same experience as ours. The joyful welcome of the the Filipino people and the vocational response of many enthusiastic youths were equally encouraging. We cannot forget in those beginning stages the sacrifice of Fr. Diego Buscio and his edifying witness.

The growth of the Congregation in the Philippines has been constant, which has also allowed the accompaniment of the journey of the community of India in 1987 until it was constituted as an autonomous Circumscription in 2008. The gift of vocations has permitted in time to go beyond the confines of the Philippines: to Vietnam, Papua New Guinea and South Korea in 2003; and to Indonesia in 2004. The Circumscription has soon had religious and priests, even from Indonesia and Vietnam, and with generosity has been able to open up to the missionary support even in other Circumscriptions of the Congregation.

The first part of the life of the Circumscription was naturally aimed at the formation. Let us remember the Fathers who rendered this precious service: Fr. Antonio Barbangelo, Fr. Diego Buscio, Fr. Vito Di Marzio, Fr. Adamo Calo, Fr. Tiziano Pegoraro, Fr. Vincenzo Buccheri, Fr. Joseph Aveni, Fr. Antonio Farina, Fr. Rocco Gazzaneo, Fr. Salvatore Ciranni, Fr. Carmelo

Capizzi, Fr. Cesare Bettoni, Fr. Luigi Toffanin, Fr. James Albert Rossini, Fr. Gaspare Gallitto, Fr. Philip Puntrello and Fr. Vito Lipari. Soon, however, it was possible to develop the apostolate of the Congregation in the spreading of the prayer of the Rogate and in the service to the little ones and the poor. Significant has been the choice of opening new communities in contexts of poverty, as what Father Hannibal did in the beginning in the Avignone Quarters.

Today, the Province of St. Matthew is the biggest Circumscription in the Congregation, both in terms of the number of members as well as in terms of the extent of the territory, particularly with the recent foundation in Australia. May the Lord be praised and blessed!

We have received these great gifts. We cannot treat them for self-gratification, but rather as a commitment. A particular gift to the Province has been Fr. Joseph Aveni, of blessed memory, who gave his whole self for the growth of the Province.

Furthermore, among such gifts bestowed by the Spirit on the Province, I would like to mention two actual experiences which present themselves as significant expressions of our charismatic identity: the contemplative community of Mina and the inserted community in Pasay. If we look deeply at the life of Father Hannibal, we would discover that his life progressed on these two areas: the love of God and neighbor, contemplation and closeness with the poor.

Let us together thank the Lord! But at the same time let us look ahead. Many brothers and sisters in the vast continent of Asia still awaits the proclamation of the Gospel and we should feel called to bring to them the Gospel of the Rogate which is the secret of universal salvation. We need to fortify our roots in the faithfulness to the charism so that this blessed tree may further spread out its branches. We need to look at the shining figures of our confreres and sisters who have preceded us in our history. Let us allow ourselves to be guided by our Rule of Life which permits us to walk safely in the Will of the Lord.

May the Divine Superiors, our Patron St. Matthew bless these intentions, through the intercession of Saint Hannibal Mary.

With this fervent greetings, I bless you with the love of the Lord.

  
Fr. Bruno Rampazzo RCJ  
Superior General