

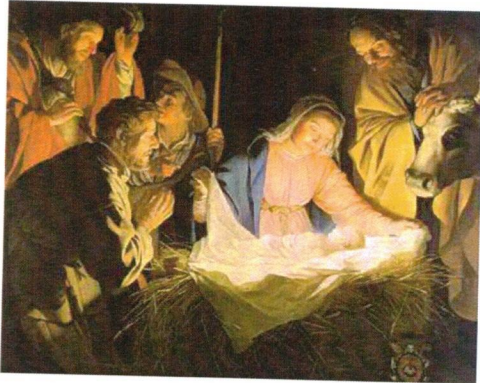
Congregazione dei Rogazionisti

Curia Generalizia

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Rome, December 8, 2022
Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.

When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So, they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child.

(Luke 2:15-17).

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2023

To the Rogationists
To the Family of the Rogate

Dearly beloved,

The shepherds of Bethlehem went and found the baby Jesus lying in the manger. A spectacle of love and joy that vanquishes any hardship and suffering; of light that dispels the darkness. In this Advent season, we also want to welcome the invitation of the angels and follow the steps of the shepherds to go to the manger, to adore the baby Jesus, contemplated by the absorbed gazes of Joseph and Mary.

It is the "glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." The wonderful union of Heaven and earth takes place in the child Jesus who is born, who comes to dwell among us, to give us salvation, His love and peace.

This word "peace" is invoked today from every corner of our lands in which the ravages and destructions of war are mounting. Today, moreover, climate upheavals, with the frequent mourning and disasters they cause, call us back to our responsibilities and contradictions in managing nature's resources. For the past two years, we have been afflicted by the pandemic, which stubbornly resists leaving us, and seems to be a metaphor for our sick world.

From the stable in Bethlehem, from the baby Jesus lying in the manger, there springs for each of us hope, the certainty of being loved by God who is love, and the ability to face the daily path with peace of heart.

If we turn our gaze on our Communities, our Circumscriptions, and our Congregation, there is no shortage of reasons for concern, but we must recognize that at the same time we experience the help of Providence or, as our holy Founder would suggest, the paternal and maternal guidance of our Divine Superiors.

In the year that is ending, we were able to celebrate the 13th General Chapter in which we experienced the Congregation's more multicultural face, and, exchanging views on synodality, we set out again, with greater commitment and with the Lord's help, to "walk together." Immediately afterward, we celebrated the Chapters of St. Luke Province and St. Matthew Province.

These were fraternal, valuable, and challenging moments that allowed us to make a community discernment on the journey of the Congregation and the two Circumscriptions, to note the positive aspects and problems, and to formulate orientations to improve our spiritual life and our apostolate.

At the same time, during this period, some Councilors, according to needs and possibilities, visited the Circumscriptions to review situations related to the areas of life or apostolate in the context of their sector. Within the framework of the General Council, the text of the Norms, updated in the Chapter, and the Chapter Document have been given an editorial revision.

Both texts are being printed and translations are in progress. A Chapter of the St. Hannibal Province will be held in January, during which it will be important to discern the way forward with the St. Anthony Province in view of the planned and agreed merger.

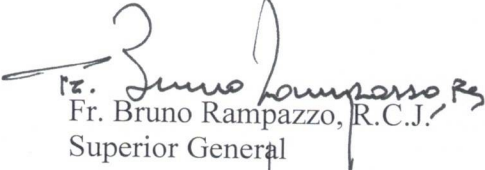
The commitment of the General Government, at this point, is to define the planning of the six-year term, based on the mandate of the 13th General Chapter and, in the line of synodality, in listening to the Circumscriptions. With this in mind, the Conference of Superiors of Circumscription is scheduled in February 2023, for discernment and discussion on programming, for the sharing of programs and issues, and, possibly, to plan the next Canonical Visitation.

I admit to you my sorrow for not having been able, in the last six-year term, due to the pandemic, to meet with you to express the closeness and fraternal affection that I feel for each of you and that I try to express on the occasions that arise.

Our fraternity experiences a special moment during Christmas. As a united family, we relive the mystery of the Holy Family in Bethlehem, letting ourselves be guided by the shining example of our holy Founder, by his ardent love, his innocent candor, and his ardent prayer. Fr. Tusino reports:

"To enter the kingdom of heaven, Jesus wants us to become children again. The Father wrote for us a little booklet of twenty-five prayers and petitions to implore this grace from the Child, promising on our part *every effort to become children of innocence and simplicity*. He had this gift from the Lord: he lived perfectly the spirit of spiritual childhood. Of course, he could not but have special tenderness for the Child Jesus. (...) One ought to see him when he carried the Child Jesus in procession around the house on February 2, at the conclusion of the Christmas holidays. Between one prayer and another, between verses, he would cry out shouts of enthusiasm and love: *Long live the Child Jesus. Long live the incarnate Word of the Father ... Long live the Son of the Immaculate Mother... Long live the delight of our hearts... Long live the Lover of our souls...* The litany would be extended, more or less; and everyone repeated that exclamation and clapped their hands... He wanted the Christmas prepared by a novena *sui generis* (of its own kind)."¹

May our Founder, St. Hannibal Mary Di Francia, accompany us in the upcoming six-year term, so that we may "walk together," and impress upon all of us this spirit of synodality, as the best gift for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2023.


Fr. Bruno Rampazzo, R.C.J.
Superior General

¹ TUSINO T., *L'anima del Padre – Testimonianze*, Roma (1973), p. 247 ss.