



Congregazione dei Rogazionisti
Curia Generalizia

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Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.



*"And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us;
and we saw his glory,
the glory of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.
(Jn 1:14).*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2024

To the Rogationists
To the Family of the Rogate

Dearly beloved,

And the Word of the Father became flesh and made his dwelling among us! These words of the Apostle John fill us with great awe. It is impossible to imagine anything greater and at the same time more humble.

Only the love that unites the lover with the beloved, the infinitely great love of God for his little creature, for each one of us, can reveal to us the mystery of this miracle that we are reminded of at Christmas.

He came to dwell among us. In our daily prayer with which we greet Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, we have recovered these words, choosing a formulation that is faithful to the Gospel and leaving out Father Hannibal's addition: "who deigned to come and dwell...".

This call to "deign", which speaks of humility, is precisely a manifestation of Father Hannibal's feelings of faith and love, expressing his awareness of taking the Word of God made flesh into his hands and giving it to the small, poor and humble family of the Avignone district. How much condescension, how much dignity in such an event!

Every year, the liturgy introduces us to this marvelous mystery that leaves us spellbound in front of the manglers of nativity scenes, gazing like little children, illuminated by the Christmas lights, wrapped in the lullabies of the bagpipers.

We feel the need for this breath of Christmas poetry, but we also must welcome the mystery of Christmas in its identity enlightened by faith. As I recalled above, at Christmas we contemplate the infinite love of the Blessed Trinity and the incarnation of the Word, who comes among us *as one who serves* (Lk 24:27) to announce salvation, to redeem us from our sins, and to sacrifice his own earthly life, from birth to the bloody sacrifice on the Cross, to give us life in eternal happiness.

If we look around us and widen our gaze to include the information that often comes to us through social media, we conclude that we are far from being saved, because the same opposition that Jesus faced during his earthly life, we also find today throughout the world about his message of love, peace, acceptance and brotherhood. All this would

lead us to say that nothing has changed. But this is not so, because we know that the Lord is with us *always, until the end of the world* (Mt 28:20).

He is also with us on the journey that we make as a Congregation, experiencing His goodness, grace and mercy as we face commitments, problems and difficulties in our lives and our apostolate.

The 13th General Chapter, which chose synodality as its theme, noted that our Congregation today, present especially in so many nations, with different cultures, with multiple riches and not a few difficulties, has a fundamental need to protect and consolidate unity in this diversity.

Synodality has been the response to this need. It does not seek to eliminate the differences and autonomies of the Circumscriptions, but, on the contrary, to value them and to involve them in dialogue, sharing, and collaboration to promote the growth of the Congregation and the Circumscriptions themselves. The theme of the Chapter and the General Government Planning shared and defined this year with the Circumscriptions during the two Conferences (in March and September), was expressed in the motto "Let us walk together", with all that this implies in the life and apostolate of the Circumscriptions and communities.

In this journey, in the coming years, we will be called to further define the decentralization of the Congregation and to carry out some restructuring. The canonical visitation that I will make to the Circumscriptions will promote the necessary discernment.

In general, we need to face together the difficulties that some Circumscriptions are experiencing because of the vocation crisis, growing in the sense of belonging, interculturality and fraternity. Facing this urgency and walking together will mean increasing and improving communication, mutual support also in the field of formation and apostolate, sharing economic resources and, in short, the sense of belonging.


We want to walk together with the Family of the Rogate and especially with the Sisters Daughters of Divine Zeal towards the coming Jubilee (2025) and towards the centenary of the blessed *transitus* of our Founder, St. Hannibal Mary Di Francia (2027), letting ourselves be guided by his teaching and example.

St. Hannibal became aware of the mission he had received from the Holy Spirit to give the charism of the Congregation to the Church and the world, by raising the awareness of the local Churches, by giving life to our two Congregations, by involving the lay faithful through tireless preaching and the press, and by finding in them valuable collaborators.

Walking together toward the appointments that await us will therefore mean letting ourselves be guided by the charismatic inspiration that has been given to us.

Let us ask the Child Jesus, who comes to dwell among us, his Mother, the Immaculate Virgin Mary, and the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph to bless our journey.

May our Father and Founder, St. Hannibal Mary Di Francia, impart to all of us this spirit of synodality as the best gift for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2024.


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