



Rome, 8 December 2019



«Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger».

(Lk 2:10-12).

Greetings of a Holy Christmas and Happy New Year

To the Rogationists
To the Family of the Rogate

Dearests,

The angels bring glad tidings to the shepherds and invite them to go and meet the Son of God who came down from Heaven to live among us. He is our Savior, he is the Lord Jesus Christ.

The shepherds are helped in their search through “a sign”, the most incredible that could be imagined: “a child wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger”. It is the sign of love, of humility, of giving up to immolation.

We also want to take this path.

We have entered the fervent season of Advent and we are moving towards the Christmas of the Lord with the echo of the recent Synod, in which the cry of the Amazon has been heard in the light of faith, and challenges all of us to search for new paths that make possible a *kairós* for the Church and for the world.

As Family of the Rogate, during this year that is drawing to a close, we have remembered the 150th anniversary of the Inspiration of Rogate, an appropriate occasion to reflect together on the ecclesial value of our charism in the face of today's challenges. We remember the beautiful days we spent together in Rome, on May 15 and 16, in St. Peter's and the Pantheon; during the Conference of the Superiors of Circumscriptions in Messina when we paused in adoration in the place of the Inspiration, the church of St. John of Malta, on October 17; moreover, the interesting seminar on Rogationist pedagogy on November 20, in Brindisi. We are called to live for the Rogate and to keep the Rogate alive in the Church.

The charism of the Rogate, in everyday reality, for us is embodied in our Rule of Life. The celebrations and commemorations help us to reflect, to make proper discernment and to

verify it on our path. But the Word of the Lord, which reaches us in a particular way through the pericope of the Rogate, tends to become a concrete guide on our path.

On this basis of the Rule of Life, given to us by the Church and received in the moment of our religious profession, we are called to build our fraternal life of communion. Sometimes we find it difficult to put together our strengths and talents for the common good, to listen to one another in a fair constructive confrontation, to let go of prejudices and talks that can create discomfort for our fraternity.

Fraternal charity calls us to be merciful as our Heavenly Father is merciful and to have a loving care for the confreres, especially those who bear the hardships of old age or the test of illness.

The Child Jesus "lying down in a manger" and surrounded by the humble shepherds tells us very clearly that our charity must make us attentive and present beside the last of the society in the territory where we live and work. I would say that we must "live with the heart" in the territory. We receive every day this call and this evangelical witness from Pope Francis.

A faithful witness, so dear to many of us, was Fr. Giuseppe Aveni, for whom recently the Congregation for the Cause of the Saints granted the Nulla Osta in order to start the Diocesan Inquiry in the Philippines.

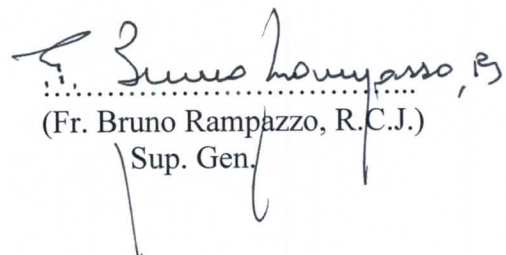
My visit to the Congregation, which I will continue over the next few months, in the Quasi Province of St. Thomas and then in the Province of St. Matthew, allows me to experience the joy of fraternity and to transmit the encouragement to continue on our journey with fidelity to the vocation we received.

At the Conference with the Superiors and Councils of Circumscriptions held in Messina in October, we made a useful assessment on some problems of our life as a Congregation. We have noted the need to meet again in Rome from 17 to 21 February 2020, this time only with the Superiors of Circumscriptions, in order to carry on the discernment initiated. The meeting aims to be a moment of "synodality" in the governance of our Religious Family. Thus, we will finalize the discernment on the particular theme of the next General Chapter. We will reflect together, in particular, on the exchange of personnel, the destination of some structures, the consolidation of missionary presences and the prospect of some new opening or closing, the economic situation. We will consider the importance of the Laity of the Rogate in the challenges they see us engaged as a Congregation, in view of the first International Symposium of the Rogationist Laity scheduled in July 2020.

I would like to extend my heartfelt wishes to each of you, dear Confreres, the Daughters of Divine Zeal, the Rogationist Missionaries who have recently renewed the Government of the Association, the Laity, and in particular those who are currently tried by illness or suffering. May our closeness to the Lord, to the Virgin Mary, and the communion with the brothers and sisters obtain for us the comfort, peace and joy of Christmas.

May Mary, Joseph and the Child Jesus grant us this grace, through the intercession of our Celestial Patrons and of our Holy Founder.

In union of prayer I greet you with affection in the Lord. Merry Christmas!


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(Fr. Bruno Rampazzo, R.C.J.)
Sup. Gen.