



February 12, 2020
Rome

Prot. No. 37/2020

Subject: The distinguished relic of the Heart of Saint Hannibal in Rome

To: the Rogationists
the Daughters of Divine Zeal
the Family of the Rogate

Dearest Brothers and Sisters,

St. Hannibal's heart throbbed for the Rogate throughout its existence, as the Founder himself confessed, "For the Rogate we say only this: he dedicated himself to it, either for zeal or out of obsession, or both."¹

This zeal of his was driven by the certainty that the secret for the salvation of souls and for the glory of God is contained in the Rogate.

When Father Hannibal became aware that the Pious Work was beginning to take root and had the approval of the Supreme Pontiffs and the aggregation of numerous prelates, he understood that it was time to pitch the tent in Rome, the center of Christianity.

At the end of 1924, our Bulletin reported that the wait was about to end because "a Work that has the mission of the Divine Rogate, in preference to any other city, must be in Rome, under the gaze of the Supreme Pontiff, because as His Holiness Benedict XV said to Rev. Father Founder in the audience of May 1921, the Pope is the foremost among all to be interested in this great Command of Our Lord Jesus Christ."²

In 2016, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Parish of Saints Anthony and Hannibal Mary at Piazza Asti in Rome, the relic of the incorrupt Heart of St. Hannibal was temporarily brought there. On that occasion, an assiduous procedure was carried out on the relic, which was already beginning to lose some fragments.

As I reminded you in my letter of October 21, 2019, Prot. No. 299/19, it has been noted that the distinguished relic, with its permanent emplacement in Rome, the center of Christianity and of our Congregation, would be venerated by faithful and pilgrims, and by confreres and Daughters of Divine Zeal who pass by Rome from all parts of the world. For such a suitable choice, the favorable opinion of the Government of the two Italian Provinces,

¹ Written by Fr. Hannibal in Messina, probably on March 7, 1924 (from the

² *Bollettino*, Nov-Dec 1924, p. 92.

and the necessary authorizations from the Dioceses of Messina and Rome and, then, from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints were obtained.

On November 1, 2019, the distinguished relic was welcomed in the parish community of Saints Anthony and Hannibal Mary in Rome.

Finally, on Saturday, February 15, 2020, at 7:00 PM, the permanent reliquary-monstrance of the Heart of Saint Hannibal will be inaugurated in the Church of Saints Anthony and Hannibal Mary during a solemn Eucharistic concelebration. The date was random, dictated by the schedule of the refurbishing works of the Chapel, but by a happy coincidence it falls on the feast of the relics of St. Anthony of Padua, as if to underline the deep bond that unites the two Saints after whom the Roman Church in Piazza Asti is named.

Let us live this event with the sentiments of gratitude, faith and particular devotion to the Divine Superiors. Let us do more to spread the knowledge of and the devotion to our holy Founder, that constitute the great wealth of our Congregation and the natural mediation in the transmission of the charism of the Rogate.

Although it is in the nature of things, I consider it appropriate to point out that the authority, in relation to the distinguished relic of the Heart of Saint Hannibal, belongs to the Superior General of the Congregation, and therefore I enjoin that any future intervention or relocation, requires the authorization of the Superior General, with his Council.

Asking for the paternal blessing of our Founder, Saint Hannibal Mary Di Francia, on each of us, I offer you my best regards and cordial greetings.

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

.....
(Fr. Fortunato Siciliano, R.C.J.)
General Secretary