

Congregazione dei Rogazionisti

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Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord



"I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory which you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

(Jn 17:20-23)

Happy and Holy Easter!

To the Rogationists
To the Family of the Rogate

Dearly beloved,

These words of Jesus, reported by the Apostle whom Jesus loved, are of inexpressible beauty. We can say with certainty that at the Last Supper Jesus was thinking of each one of us, of those who believe in him through the word that the Apostles proclaimed to us.

From the words of Jesus we are transported into the vision of the Trinity, in which the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, for they are one. From these heights, Jesus looks down on the group of his apostles and asks that the unity experienced by the Holy Trinity be experienced by the apostles and by us. It seems like an absurd request, but Jesus, turning to the Father, reminds him that he wanted to make us all sharers in his glory and therefore called us also to live in unity. By uniting himself with us in the incarnation, Jesus unites us with the Father, as he says in the beautiful closing words: "I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

We experience God's lowering himself to our smallness, his love and tenderness. We discover our vocation to share in this love, his glory, the mission to witness to this love and union so that the world may believe.

It is the mystery of faith that we relive in Holy Mass, it is the Easter of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

When we "descend into this world," we witness a very different spectacle, one of overwhelming violence, of unspeakable cruelty, of selfish closure. The words of poet Dante Alighieri at the end of Canto XXII of *Paradise* ring true. From the constellation of Gemini, he sees the earth as small and distant, so different from the beauty and bliss of heaven, and recognizes it as "the threshing floor that makes us so fierce."

Surely, as we go to meet the Risen Lord who greets us with the proclamation of peace, each one of us will welcome this greeting by transforming it into a petition, so that peace may

finally be restored to so many brothers and sisters in Ukraine and in so many other parts of the world where it is longed for.

In his message for Lent, Pope Francis urged us to let Jesus lead us on to ascend an uphill path that, like a mountain trek, requires effort, sacrifice and concentration. In our religious life and in our apostolate, we experience many difficulties every day. Then, referring to these sacrifices, the Pope adds: "These requisites are also important for the synodal journey to which, as a Church, we are committed to making. We can benefit greatly from reflecting on the relationship between Lenten penance and the synodal experience."

We can say that the Conference of Superiors and Treasurers of the Circumscriptions, held on March 12-18, in our Rogate Casa per Ferie in Morlupo, was in some ways along these lines. We carried out a demanding work of discernment, comparing with one another the draft plan for the six-year term of the General Government. We did this using the method of synodality and listening to the Chapter document, *Rogationist Religious Life Today: Unity, Sharing and Coordination*, we identified synodality among communities, circumscriptions, and the central government as the necessary way to face the challenges that await us in religious life and mission.

We reaffirmed our desire to act together as a Congregation, even in our Houses and Circumscriptions, aware that only by being together can we offer the best development to our Religious Family.

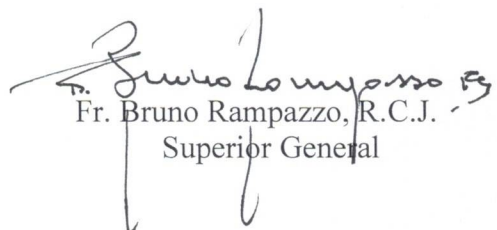
The Constitutions remind us: "The unity and communion of the whole Congregation are the supreme goods to be safeguarded and pursued with full commitment" (C 168).

Let us listen to our Father and Founder: "I will nourish in myself a constant and lively affection for my own institute. All its interests will be my interests. I will dedicate myself with holy zeal to make it known. I will help it to grow, as much as my poor efforts will allow me. I will do so through my poor services, sacrifices, my unworthy prayers, and unceasing efforts for my personal sanctification and that of my confreres. I will pray to the Supreme God for good vocations and, as much as I can, I will try to attract vocations according to the Heart of God, also for the other Institute of the Divine Zeal of the Heart of Jesus" (Declarations and Promises, 30).

May the reasons for concern not make us forget the graces of the Lord and the good we are doing with His help in so many regions of the world. We joyfully received the news of the nomination to the episcopate of our dear confrere of the Saint Luke Province, Fr. Juarez Albino Destro. We bless the Lord.

My Easter greetings go to all of you, dear confreres, especially to those who are sick and those in difficult situations. I extend a special greeting and good wishes to my confreres, the Daughters of Divine Zeal, the Rogationist missionaries, the Rogationist associations and the lay faithful who share the charism of the Rogate. I also extend my cordial greetings to the Little Mission for the Deaf and Mute. May the Risen Jesus grant us all his peace.

I entrust this wish to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, her spouse, St. Hannibal, and our holy protectors, while I affectionately greet everyone in the Lord.


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