



Conference of the Superiors of Circumscriptions

Homily of the Closing Mass

Morlupo, March 18, 2023

Dear Brothers,

We have come to the end of this our first meeting of the Superiors and Treasurers of Circumscription. We thank the Lord for the experience of fraternal communion and synodality that we have lived. I am sure that this experience of walking together, with the help and guidance of the Spirit, will bear abundant fruit for the life of our Congregation.

We were able to learn more about the situation, including the economic situation of our Congregation, analyze the challenges we face, and look at the future with hope, confident that the Lord is always by our side. We are aware that the future always calls for a revision of our patterns and structures, seeking the most appropriate ones so that the charism and mission of the Congregation may grow faithfully in the times and contexts in which we live. We are all convinced of the need to consolidate our unity by working together in communion and coordination. This is a challenge before us that requires not only a simple collaboration among the Circumscriptions but also a determined will to walk together, among the Circumscriptions, a path that leads us to a different and hopeful future. We must continue along this path of sharing and coordination with humility, discernment, and synodality, listening to one another and, above all, listening to the Lord.

We have tried to know, to deepen, and to find solutions to our most urgent problems, not least the economic ones, but it is always necessary to continue to develop everything that concerns the spiritual and fraternal life of the Confreres and of the communities, with privileged attention to the initial and ongoing formation of the Confreres. I think that everything depends on this: to take great care of our spiritual and fraternal life, beyond the purely formal level. We must have the same sentiments as the heart of Christ. Fraternal life is an essential support; we are called to live out fraternity and to be its credible signs and witnesses.

We must look to the future with optimism and vitality, but this requires that we take into account the presence of collaborators, the lay people who are part of the family of the Rogate and who are also organized in the various associations. Together with them, we can better carry out the Rogationist mission entrusted to us by our Founder. Let it be our commitment to care for, form, and accompany our collaborators.

The Gospel of Luke offers us today the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. We thank the Lord for this story, which teaches us a very important lesson. It is a gift of his love for us. In the face of these two contrasting characters, we are warned of the



temptation to feel better, to feel okay, and to feel satisfied when we do something good. The liturgy of this Lenten season offers this story for our meditation, precisely to prevent us from feeling that we can feel better than others because of the prayer, fasting, or works of mercy we do.

In the first reading, the Lord tells us: "I want love and not sacrifice; the knowledge of God more than holocausts". Our main concern during this Lenten season should be to feel more united with the mercy of Jesus, who was counted among the wicked, took upon himself the sins of all of us, and accepted to die for our salvation. Jesus did not distance himself from people, he did not place himself above them, but was with them, even putting himself on the level of the worst sinners. We are called to follow His example.

If we pray more and do some penance during this Lenten season, it must be for our own sins and the sins of others.

Our drawing closer to God must be seen in the way we approach others, the Confreres in our community, with greater sincere love, and with greater mercy. Our relationship with God and our relationship with others can never be separated.

To remain faithful to this spiritual attitude, we must remember that all the good we do can only be done because of the Lord, in union with Him. Indeed, Jesus reminds us: "Without me, you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). When we are alone, we live sadly, closed in on ourselves; when we are with Jesus, we live in charity, which opens our hearts and the hearts of others. Let us, therefore, lean on the Lord with humility and trust.

I would like to say a word of gratitude to all of you, and especially to Fr. Eros Borile, the Superior of St. Anthony Province, and to the confreres of this Circumscription, for welcoming us here in Morlupo, for the food and for taking care of all the expenses of our stay. Thank you for your generosity, which we deeply appreciate. Thanks to the General Council for the detailed preparation of our meeting, and for the translations of our speeches and presentations. Thank you to the members of the Technical Office and to those who prepared the food and cleaned the house. We assure you of our prayers.

We ask for the help of the Virgin Mary, St. Anthony, and the Founder, St. Hannibal Mary.

Amen!