



**CONGREGAZIONE DELLA MISSIONE
CURIA GENERALIZIA**

Via dei Capasso, 30 – 00164 ROMA

Tel: +39 06 661 30 61 – Fax: +39 06 666 38 31 – Email: segreteria@cmcuria.org

SUPERIORE GENERALE

Rome, 27 April 2020

**Good Shepherd Sunday
2020 World Day of Prayer for Vocations**

Dear confreres,

May the grace and peace of Jesus be always with us!

Every year on the **Fourth Sunday of Easter**, also called Good Shepherd Sunday, we celebrate the **World Day of Prayer for Vocations**. In this year's letter for the 2020 World Day of Prayer for Vocations, **Pope Francis reflects on four words: gratitude, encouragement, fatigue, and praise.**

As we recently celebrated Lent, Holy Week, and Easter in a very different way because of the extraordinary conditions we are experiencing in the world related to the COVID-19 coronavirus, such also will be the case for the 2020 World Day of Prayer for Vocations. In light of Pope Francis' letter for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, we must reflect on, act on, and live out the situation in which today's world places us. Thus, his words become a lighthouse for responding to the present circumstances, as well as for preparing to face the time and reality after COVID-19, having vocational promotion especially in mind.

Let us move from thoughts of discouragement and fatigue to ones of gratitude and praise. It is the gratitude of being called by the Teacher of Nazareth to find fulfillment in life, to be gazed upon by Jesus, to experience an eye-to-eye encounter with the Love of my life. As Pope Francis writes in his message, "Every vocation is born of that gaze of love." He goes on to say, Jesus "gives us the enthusiasm we need to live our vocation with joy and fervor."

From 19 November to 1 December 2018, some 75 confreres from every province, vice-province, region, and international mission participated in the First International Encounter of Vocational Promotion Ministers. They gathered at the International Formation Center (CIF) in the Motherhouse of the Congregation of the Mission in Paris and shared the joy of the Vincentian missionary vocation.

In the *Final Document* of that meeting, the confreres expressed a clear option for a “Renewed Culture of Vocations,” which option when experienced and lived from the perspective of the Gospel, revitalizes our passion to follow Jesus Christ, evangelizer of the Poor (a following of Christ in every aspect of our lives). In this way, we can develop an attitude, a sensitivity, and a pedagogy that will help us put in place a lifestyle that favors the establishment of a culture of vocations in each one of our local communities and that will, at the same time, allow us to cultivate a Vincentian Spirituality of being called. **The zeal, fire, conviction, and commitment expressed in the *Final Document* by the confreres officially responsible for vocational promotion is to be nourished continually in each province, vice-province, region, and international mission and in the hearts, minds, and deeds of every confrere of the Little Company.**

From the gaze of Jesus, who gives us the enthusiasm we need to live our vocation with joy and fervor, follows the logical consequence that each one of us will do all in his power to help those young persons whom Jesus is calling to consecrated life, to our Little Company concretely, to respond positively to His call. **If each one of us, by Jesus’s mercy, invites even one young person to join the Congregation, accompanying him through prayer and personal example, and supporting him directly or indirectly through his different stages of formation, our Little Company will grow in sanctity and in members. This is possible, because for Jesus nothing is impossible.**

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic we are experiencing, gratitude for our personal call flows into praise and gives birth to new initiatives, decisions, and paths that will cultivate the culture of vocations and, as part of it, vocational promotion. The present limitations on personal encounters with people are encouraging new ideas and approaches that keep us in touch with the young through deepening of personal and community prayer for new vocations; using social media and other means of communication; organizing prayer meetings, vocational discernment, and retreats online; participating at the Eucharist and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament through streaming; sharing formation materials with the youth, etc. It is a deep source of joy to see the inventiveness, zeal, fire, and conviction of so many confreres in the area of vocational promotion, which is one of the Congregation’s clear priorities.

I would like to thank so very much all the confreres directly responsible for vocational promotion in every province, vice-province, region, and international mission, together with the team of collaborators among the priests, brothers, and seminarians, as well as among the laity, for all your wonderful service and witness! I also would like to thank so very much all the Visitors, Regional Superiors, and Superiors of the International Missions for your very great personal support to all of us confreres, as well as the encouragement to participate actively, in every way possible, in this our common call.

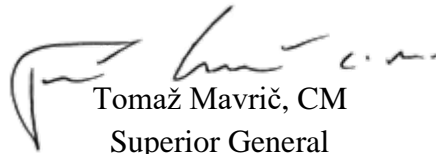
If, for any reason, a province, vice-province, region, or international mission does not yet have a confrere primarily responsible for vocational promotion, supported by a team of collaborators with a yearly plan that will help take concrete and regular steps in this direction, I would like to encourage you, at this specific moment, to ask a confrere to make such a service his primary ministry, often in addition to other services that he has.

The concluding words of the *Final Document* of the First International Encounter of Vocational Promotion Ministers at the Motherhouse in Paris in 2018 says the following: **“We are certain that the culture of vocations represents the dream and the mission of our Founder, because we know that workers will multiply, attracted by the perfume of such charity”** (CCD III, 258; letter 1002 to Étienne Blatiron, Superior in Genoa, 13 December 1647).

I would like to conclude this letter by quoting the end of Pope Francis’ message for the 2020 World Day of Prayer for Vocations:

Dear friends, on this day in particular, but also in the ordinary pastoral life of our communities, I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations. May she touch the hearts of the faithful and enable each of them to discover with gratitude God’s call in their lives, to find courage to say “yes” to God, to overcome all weariness through faith in Christ, and to make of their lives a song of praise for God, for their brothers and sisters, and for the whole world. May the Virgin Mary accompany us and intercede for us.

Your brother in Saint Vincent,



Tomaž Mavrič, CM
Superior General