



# OPUS CHRISTI SALVATORIS MUNDI

Newsletter  
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MISSIONARY SERVANTS OF THE POOR OF THE THIRD WORLD

## Papal Intention for Evangelization:

That many young people may accept the Lord’s invitation to consecrate their lives to proclaiming the Gospel.

Intention entrusted to us by the Holy Father at the Apostolate of Prayer.

## A Word from the Magisterium

*The first Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, EVANGELII GAUDIUM, was released on 24th February 2013, on the Solemnity of the feast of Christ the King, that is to say, at the end of the YEAR OF FAITH. Beginning today, we will present the parts of the exhortation that are most relevant to our charism, around the themes of poverty and mission.*

### II THE INCLUSION OF POOR IN SOCIETY

186. Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society’s most neglected members.

*In union with God, we hear a plea*

187. Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid. A mere glance at the Scriptures is enough to make us see

### Summary:

- A Word from the Magisterium.....1
- News from the Church.....2
- The Light of our Charism . . . . .3
- News from our Homes.....4
- Missionary Pledge of the Month.....4

how our gracious Father wants to hear the cry of the poor: “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them... so I will send you...” (Ex 3:7-8, 10). We also see how he is concerned for their needs: “When the Israelites cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up for them a deliverer” (Jg 3:15). If we, who are God’s means of hearing the poor, turn deaf ears to this plea, we oppose the Father’s will and his plan; that poor person “might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt” (Dt 15:9). A lack of solidarity towards his or her needs will directly affect our relationship with God: “For in bitterness of soul he calls down a curse upon you, his Creator will hear his prayer” (Sir 4:6). The old question always returns: “How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods, and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?” (1 Jn 3:17). Let us recall also how bluntly the apostle James speaks of the cry of the oppressed: “The wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts” (5:4). (continues)

## *News from the Church*

### 9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> March

Pope Francis has invited the members of the Roman Curia to celebrate the spiritual exercises of Lent – preached Mgr, Angelo De Donatis (a Monseigneur from the clergy of Rome) – in the “Casa Divin Maestro” dei Paolini (in the area “Castelli Romani” next to Lake Albano, about 40km south of Rome, close to the Papal Residence Castelgandolfo). This is something new – something among the many new things that are characterising the Pontificate of Pope Francis – in previous years these Exercises have always been done in the Apostolic Palace of the Vatican.

Up until now, the spiritual exercises were primarily directed to the Holy Father. While the members of the Curia were able to assist with turns in the morning or the evening, they were not implicated in a continuous way. In 2013, the last time that Benedict XVI lived them, the preaching was given by Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi. Contrarily, this year it is the intention of the Holy Father that they come together “in a reserved and silent way , far from the offices where they usually find themselves”. The participation of about 40 people is anticipated, among them prefects, presidents and secretaries of the Dicasteries that make up the Curia.

### 27<sup>th</sup> March

The president of the United States, Barack Obama, will be received by Pope Francis in the Vatican on 27<sup>th</sup> March. It will be the first meeting of Obama with the current Pope: in fact at the Mass to mark the beginning of his Pontificate on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013, the United States were represented by the vice president, Joe Biden. This news came only a few days after John Kerry, the head of the U.S. diplomacy, met with Mgr. Pietro Parolin, the Secretary of the Vatican state, on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

## *The Light of our Charism*

*We continue with our presentation of a document by Father Giovanni Salerno, from 14 – 9 – 1986, which is about the charism of the contemplative branch of the Servants of the Poor.*

### **Contemplate his face and you will be radiant!**

(...)

### **3.2 “Preface” and Charity**

Sing “*amantis est*” (Singing is a characteristic of he who loves), said St. Augustine. But, in order to be able to sing, one needs to live what they sing: and to live, one needs to feel and to breathe. So, every Servant has to breathe pure air and live the same life as Christ: in his home, in fraternity, there has to be an environment of true silence, of discretion, of contemplation. Everything has to be a “preface” to the true contemplation, so that everybody can meet with the Lord. In a hospital, everything is conditioned and ordered to assure the best environmental conditions so that any type of illness can be eradicated as soon as possible. This is how the environment where the Servants live has to be: everything conditioned for the contemplation that heals man: “*Contemplate his face and you will be radiant*”.

And as a shining beacon in the community, charity! Charity in the community is like a precious and fragile, very fragile, treasure. Everybody must treat it with great care and treat it very gently so that it doesn’t break and so that it shines more brightly everyday, until it is converted into a fire around which everybody gathers to get warm. The summit of the Eucharist and of communion is charity: “Love one another as I have loved you!”.

The news of the Gospel is in fraternal love, which has to be the characteristic of the true Servant of the

Poor. This love is the fire that Jesus came to bring to the earth. He wanted it to be lit in many hearts.

### **3.3 The double Altar: of the Word and of the Eucharist**

All men need to feel a bit of human warmth. This need of fraternal love comes from our participation in the Eucharistic. The Contemplative Servant knows that in the Sacred Eucharist he finds the strength to witness to a truly effective and efficient love. Therefore, the Servant of the Poor must have a great devotion to two things, principally: the Bread of the Word and Eucharistic Bread.

“You have given me in my weakness Your sacred Flesh to refresh my soul and body, and ‘*You have set Your word as the guiding light for my feet*’ (Psalm 118, 105). Without them I could not live aright, for the Word of God is the light of my soul (cfr. Prov 6 23), and Your Sacrament is the Bread of Life (cfr. Jn 6, 48). These also may be called the two tables, one here, one there, in the treasure house of holy Church. One is the table of the holy altar, having the holy Bread that is the precious Body of Christ. The other is the table of divine law, containing holy doctrine that teaches all the true faith and firmly leads them within the veil, the Holy of holies.” (*Imitation of Christ*, Book IV, Chap. 11, nn. 16-20).

Each fraternity of Contemplatives will have, as in the fraternity of Contemplatives in action, this great affection for the Word of God and the Eucharist. It is from here that life is received, the strength to fight against oneself, to work and to have energy to serve the poor.

(continues)

## *News from our Homes*

### **Cuba**

On 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013, Father Álvaro Gómez (Spanish) together with Father Urs Zanoni (Swiss) and Father Zsolt Zsabò (Hungarian) left Lima after celebrating the Mass there to go to Habana, the capital of Cuba, ready to take the first steps for the new foundation of the Missionary Servants of the Poor. When they arrived, they stayed in the priestly house, San Juan Vianney. The following day they left for Cienfuegos where they met with Bishop Domingo Oropesa, with whom they went to the house where they would be staying for the next few days (where our missionaries stay) and they established the programme for the communities that they were going to support above all during the Christmas season. It was a truly joyous Christmas, very lively, characterised by beautiful Christmas pageants which several groups of different ages and with different talents (solo singing, choirs, instrument playing, acting...) participated in.

Apart from that, the days were characterised by the celebration of Masses, the administration of the Sacraments (above all, the sacrament of Reconciliation) visits to the sick and to families (by whom the missionaries were welcomed with joy and to whom the reason for our arrival in their country was explained, and also our wish to

instruct them in the faith, and they were also invited to participate in the liturgical celebrations), and moments of catechesis, mostly before the Mass. The catechesis that the missionaries gave before the Baptism of the Lord was very interesting. After a brief introduction on the importance of the Word of God, Sunday's Gospel was read, explained, and then the participants shared what faith in God meant to them. There was also the opportunity to meet various religious – Carmelites, Capuchins, Dominicans, Marists and Jesuits, among others – who had worked in the country for several years, and who belonged to the CONCUR (Cuban Confederation of Religious).

On 9<sup>th</sup> January, Fr. Urs and Fr. José went to see a presentation on the Bible in La Habana Cathedral, which a group of Americans from Oklahoma had just set up. They came from different Christian denominations, and were moved by the desire for everybody to read the Bible and to let themselves be transformed by the Word of God. This presentation was a suggestion of the Pope emeritus Benedict XIV, who had seen an exposition similar to this one, in Rome, and after having visited Cuba, he proposed that they do it there as well.

To sum up, these few days were the first steps of the new foundation, after which Fr. Álvaro Gómez returned to Peru. We commend to your prayers this new venture that God has prepared for us, for the Church and for many people who are eager to receive the Word of God.

#### **Missionary Pledge of the Month:**

During this month I will strive to let people know about the Movement and its Charism, giving out the leaflets, speaking with people who do not yet know about it...