



Congregazione delle Suore Carmelitane

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Dearest Sisters,

We are running out of school activities, some communities have just begun, others, who are with other apostolates than schools, don't have neither beginning nor end.

A priest, was asking me where in the world the Institute fulfills its mission, to my answer He stated: "On your Institute the sun never sets" (quote a famous phrase of Charles V referring to his vast empire). It is nice to think that, while the sisters in Europe rest, the other sisters, at the polar opposite of the Earth, pray and work and vice versa. We support each other as well in the work and leisure: "meditating day and night on the law of the Lord and keeping watch in prayer" *Carmelite Rule* n°. 10

I hope that the sentence of Charles V is prophetic for the present and for the future of our Institute: the sun should never set and even dimming. It is up to us to make it shine always and anywhere. But alas, there are sad faces, a tired, gloomy, unapproachable, person who never sketches a smile and complain that nobody smiles at them, always unhappy with everything. Let Us walk with our head up facing where the sun shines, though overshadowed by some passing cloud, we are certain that, beyond this, He is there, to warm and enlighten us. An ever-watchful presence over us that draws us to Him to share every step of our lives. "Throw your burden in God, and He will lead you." We should be people who are capable to experience and express this joy. "Where there are religious men and women, there is joy," says Pope Francis.

The year of consecrated life has strongly recalled us to take up the path of conversion, of communion with Christ and with our brothers and sisters, the only true strength of our living; a renewed beginning of more fraternal relations. It is impressive to see sometimes the sisters (few actually) who refuse to give forgiveness, forgetting what Jesus tells us in the Gospel: "If you do not forgive your brethren from your heart, neither will your Father forgive you." Pope Francis never tires of repeating his constant exhortations about mercy.

We are living very beautiful moments in the Church, even by force of inertia, should move us, touch our hearts and lead us to conversion.

I wonder with what spirit we present ourselves to the altar every morning to receive Jesus in the Holy Communion, the bond of unity and peace, when we are so reluctant to forgive! Very

often is not reflected in us the face of Christ, a face of a Father, "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love (Ps 103.8).

Sometimes in our communities can occur mistakes, misunderstandings, conflicts over trifles and little things almost childish. Of our ailment we do not point a finger on one or the other sister, but we should point at ourselves where our discomfort lurks. We are not called by God to respond for the actions of the sisters, but of our own. The good that we notice in others, must always encourage us, as best for us; It is that at times we are short-sighted as if we are with myopia. Mercy should prevail over conflict, to open paths to reconciliation and forgiveness. Mary, "woman of the first step", as defined by Mons. Tonino Bello, she gives us the strength to take the first every time there is a need of giving forgiveness.

Let us think back the three pillars of our religious life suggested by the Holy Father at the closing of the year of the consecrated life: Prophecy-Proximity-Hope. They are really a program for life that calls us to revitalize the joy, tenderness and hope. The prophecy is the specific of our consecrated life and that is "to proclaim with our lives, even more than with words, the reality of God: saying of God."

The proximity encourages us to be like Jesus, closer to the people; to share their joys and sorrows, show with our love, the fatherly face of God and the maternal caress of the Church. Hope springs from the ability to repeat the "Yes" to the initial call of Jesus. His call and our response keeps our hope alive.

Dear Sisters, this year recur ten years after the Beatification of Mother Maria Teresa Scilli, our Foundress. Let us organize and remember again this event and especially to ripropose as our mother, inspirator of the gospel life.

We are programming a celebration to live together on October 8th; we will notify you as soon as possible what we plan to do for the said occasion.

Let us thank the Lord who loves us always; as you know, some of our sisters seem to have overcome serious health conditions. Thanks also for your prayers. We hope that they will pursue with their good health.

We are approaching the feast of the our Lady of Mount Carmel: we solemnize her Feast in the best way, by involving, where is possible, the people and friends around us.

May the Blessed Virgin, from her throne of glory, come towards us, take us by the hand and cover us with her mantle. She helps us to keep our eyes towards the Sun of justice and peace, then our shadows will dissolve in the paths of light and love.

With fraternal affection.

Mother Angelisa Spirandelli

Superior General