



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO THE DELEGATES AT THE CHAPTER ASSEMBLY OF THE ROGATIONIST FATHERS

To the Delegates at the Chapter Assembly of the Rogationist Fathers

On the occasion of your 11th General Chapter, I would like to join you in spirit as you experience an event of grace: it is a valid appeal to return increasingly to the roots of your Congregation, to deepen the charism to be able subsequently to embody it in the most suitable ways in today's social and cultural context.

In these intense days, you wish to focus your attention on the theme: "The Rule of Life, an expression of consecration, a guarantee of the charismatic identity, support of fraternal communion, a mission project".

You are intending to review and approve your Institute's Constitutions and Norms to bring them into line especially with the new ecclesial sensibility that resulted from the [Second Vatican Council](#) and is codified in the Code of Canon Law in force today. This commitment has a special importance since it is a question of presenting to the entire Religious Family reference texts to which each one must conform his own experience of fraternal and apostolic life to be an eloquent sign of God's love and an instrument of salvation in every context. May God bless your resolutions! For them to be fruitful it is necessary that you faithfully preserve the spiritual patrimony handed down to you by your Founder, St Hannibal Mary Di Francia, who had an intense love for Christ and always drew inspiration from him in carrying out an effective vocations apostolate, as well as courageous work for his needy neighbour. Follow his example and joyfully carry on his mission that is still valid today, in spite of the different social conditions in which we live. In particular, spread increasingly his spirit of prayer and of concern for all the vocations in the Church; may you be painstaking labourers for the coming of the Kingdom of God, expending all your energy on evangelization and on human advancement.

Today the great challenge of inculturation requires that you proclaim the Good News in languages and ways that can be understood by the people of our time, involved in rapidly changing social

and cultural processes. Consequently the field of the apostolate open before you is vast! Like your Founder, give your life for those who "thirst" for hope, cultivate an authentic passion for education, above all for youth, expend yourselves in generous pastoral activity among people, especially for those who are suffering in body and mind. In this regard I would like to recall what I said recently, as it were, to sum up the Year for Priests: "Every Pastor, therefore, is a means through whom Christ himself loves men: it is through our ministry, dear priests, it is through us that the Lord reaches souls, instructs, guards and guides them" (General Audience Catechism, 26 May 2010).

Your Congregation boasts a long history, written by courageous witnesses of Christ and of his Gospel. Today you are called to walk on this path with renewed zeal, to impel yourselves, with prophetic freedom and wise discernment on hazardous apostolic roads and missionary frontiers, fostering close collaboration with the Bishops and with the other members of the Ecclesial Community. The vast horizons of evangelization and the urgent need to witness to the Gospel Message to all, without distinction, constitute the field of your apostolate. A great many people are still waiting to know Jesus, the one Redeemer of man, and many situations of injustice and moral and material hardship are calling believers into question. Such an urgent mission demands ceaseless personal and community conversion. Only hearts that are fully open to the action of Grace are able to interpret the signs of the times and understand the cries of humanity in need of hope and peace.

In the various fields of your ecclesial service, faithful adherence to Christ and to his Gospel shines out. May the Blessed Virgin, Queen of vocations and Mother of priests, protect you, help you and be a reliable guide to you on the journey of your Religious Family, so that it may bring to fruition its every project of good. With these hopes, while I assure my affectionate remembrance in prayer to each one of you and for the work of your Chapter, I cordially impart my Blessing which I willingly extend to all the Rogationists, to the Daughters of Divine Zeal and to everyone you meet in your daily apostolate.

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