



The Holy See

**GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING PROMOTED BY THE CONGREGATION
OF THE CANONESSES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SAXON DISTRICT (ROME)**

*Clementine Hall
Thursday, 5 December 2024*

[Multimedia]

Your Excellency, dear sisters, dear brothers,

I welcome you in this house of Peter. I also greet the director general of the *Santo Spirito in Sassia* Hospital in Rome, and the members of the general management, who accompany you today.

The Rule of Blessed Guy begins in the name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to propose to all brothers and sisters, present and future, of the Order, an exciting life project. And what is this project? "To dedicate oneself mainly to the care and service of the poor".

It is a project that is in line with the reform that Innocent III promoted in religious life, and which later crystallized in the new mendicant Orders. An interest of the Pontiff that the Holy Spirit knew how to guide thanks to the listening of several saints, such as Blessed Guy and Saint John of Matha, with whom he met at the beginning of his pontificate, as they were the motors of the project.

It is interesting to see how God's plan simmers in the kitchen of the heart - something the nuns and sisters know well - and the notes of flavour and colour gradually infuse the rules of life, then spread their perfume to the whole Church. And among these notes let me highlight three: communion, *sine proprio* and service.

In your rule, the vow of poverty is expressed in a particular form: living *without anything of your own*. This expression does not mean simply a rigorously sober and detached life, as one might define the vow today, but rather understanding that we are guests in the House of God, in the House of the Trinity that welcomes us, sharing it with the poor we are called upon to serve. Indeed, the first religious, in explicitly professing the three Gospel counsels, spoke about poverty as *communio*, following the example of the primitive Church in which “all who believed were together and had all things in common” (*Acts 2:44*).

In this way, fraternal life goes well beyond sharing spaces, tasks and services. Fraternal life means giving ourselves totally to God in our brother, a gift without reserve. *With nothing of one's own* left in the back room of worldly securities, hidden there in the cell, in the pocket or, worse still, in the heart. With nothing of one's own left in the back room of worldly securities, or nothing of one's own hidden there in the cell, or in the pocket or, worse still, in the heart, for it is only from this freedom, with nothing of one's own, that we can begin a project in which we proceed together and of which we are an eschatological sign, the journey to where the Lord invites us, the journey to heaven.

This is a journey towards God, promoted by the Holy Spirit, which makes us followers of Jesus. And when we talk about Jesus, let us not forget that he “did not come to be served but to serve” (*Mt 20:28*). This is our model. Our holiness will be in the measure in which we will be capable of making ourselves small and servers to all (cf. *Mt 23:10-11*).

May Mary, beloved daughter of the Father, mother of God the Son and Bride of the Holy Spirit, support you on this journey to make your hearts and your communities living temples of the Holy Trinity. God bless you, thank you.

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