

SUPERIOR GENERAL'S GREETINGS FEAST OF ST PAUL OF THE CROSS 19 OCTOBER 2015

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends in the Passionist Family,



Greetings to you from Ss Giovanni e Paolo in Rome where the Congregation's **XV General Synod** is currently in session. The Synod participants are reflecting, praying, sharing and discussing various issues around our Passionist vocation focusing on the theme of the Synod: ***Passionist Life: The Call to Holiness in Community for Evangelization.***

As we celebrate the feast of our Holy Founder here, I take the opportunity to share with you some thoughts of encouragement and challenge which I exhorted the Synod members:

1. **The call to conversion**

Let us hear again and again the call of Jesus to **conversion**: *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel.”* (Mk. 1:15) This is a great challenge: to fight against our self-centred human tendencies and turn-around our minds, hearts and attitudes to align itself with the dream and purpose of God for all of creation. No doubt, in our humility, God blesses, strengthens and forgives our efforts and struggles – and leads us to **holiness of life**.

2. **A vision and focus**

Let us focus on *deepening our BEING authentic disciples of Jesus, formed by the spirit of the Passion of Jesus, as witnesses of hope and compassion, in the service of our mission to announce joyfully the love and mercy of God, especially in the areas and situation where this message needs to be seen and heard.* This demands of us that we *“leave familiar shores and launch out into the deep”* – listening, taking risks, living with courage, moving out of our ‘comfort zones’ – always with confidence and trust in the God who calls us to cooperate in the building of His Reign of Justice, Love, Truth and Peace.

3. **A contemplative stance**

Let us live and respond to our Passionist vocation from a **contemplative stance**: listening, seeing and perceiving what God is doing and where the Spirit is blowing and drawing us to witness the life-force of our charism. For this, there needs to be constant reviews and renewal of our life and mission.

4. **Our witness**

Let us encourage one another in our witness to **be and live as Passionists**: that our monasteries, retreat houses and parishes be welcoming centres/shrines of prayer and spirituality where the healing love of God is experienced; that we celebrate our Passionist feasts and promote our spiritual resources and symbols with conviction and meaning; and that we minister to all, especially the suffering, with compassion, understanding, welcome, hospitality and inclusion.

On behalf of the Passionist Superiors from all parts of the Congregation gathered in Rome to celebrate the General Synod, I wish you all blessings as you commemorate the feast of St Paul of the Cross.

We will remember in particular, and I ask you to do likewise, those brothers and sisters within the Passionist Family and all those people in our midst (especially the migrants and refugees fleeing their lands) who are 'crucified' and suffer the passion with courage and faith. May St Paul of the Cross intercede on their behalf and may his prayers bring to them peace through the comforting love of God radiating from the Passion and Cross of Jesus.

"May the Passion of Jesus Christ be always in our hearts"

~ Fr Joachim Rego CP
Superior General

Feast of St Paul of the Cross
19th October 2015

