



Rome, June 12, 2021
Circ. N. 27/C2

2021-2022:

**It seems that the Lord
wants us there ... in Signa!**

Dearest Sisters and young women in formation,

***I have come to cast fire upon the earth;
and how I wish it were already kindled! (Lk. 12:49)***

We are still living the echoes of the experience of praise and gratitude that we had with the Jubilee celebrations of our 200th Foundation Anniversary and immediately after, our Aggregation to the Passionist Family. To these is added the commemorative year of the 100th Anniversary of our presence in Brazil and at present we are in the midst of the celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Passionists, an event that closely concerns us because of our charismatic bond with the Passionist Family.

In this moment of grace, history is presenting us with yet another opportunity for reflection, praise and mercy.

Next year we will celebrate the **150th Anniversary of the Reactivation of the Congregation (September 14, 1872-2022)** during which we will have the opportunity to reflect, meditate and discover how many marvels of graces the Lord has poured upon us through Sr. Crocifissa Tognoni and Sr. Pia Frosali, who did not give up when faced with the suppression of the community and who courageously, trusting in God alone, reactivated the Congregation, preserving, nourishing and incarnating the Charism of the Foundress in a new form.

When we think of our incredible and marvelous history, it is quiet natural to set dates to celebrate, to give thanks, but I believe that most importantly, we should be more concerned of the suffering that wounded the souls of our Sisters and the way in which they knew how to live it, give meaning to it and transform it into a new life. By making our own the words of Jesus on the eve of His Passion, we could comprehend the "*silence of God*" on the community suppressed by human ignorance.

To commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Reactivation, we considered it appropriate to appoint a new committee made up of Sisters from the different Continents coordinated by Sr. Daniela, who will work together with the General Government. This will be the Committee, in charge of the Jubilee celebration of the Reactivation:

- Sr. Daniela Merlo – for coordination and historical references
- Sr. Ana Lucia Lievore
- Sr. Maria Antonella Scarpelli
- Sr. Ange Kalaseki
- Sr. Katarina Bangi
- Sr. Anabella Reyes and Sr. Maria Deogenia Erispe - for the graphics.

The Committee, in coordination with the General Government, has already drawn up a program for this year. First of all, Sr. Anabella (Nannette) has designed the logo based on a slogan already quoted in this circular letter and that will accompany us in all three phases. The general theme is centered on the biblical symbolism of the fire: ***Like fire that rekindles from the ashes...***

The logo is accompanied by a brief explanation that we are attaching to this circular letter.

The commemorative celebration is divided into three phases through which we wish to retrace, although concisely, the journey of the Reactivation based on the expressions of Sr Crocifissa, the main protagonist of this difficult historical moment. We want to make our own her feelings, her faith and her courage together with her faithful companion, Sr. Pia. We pray that she may help us as we journey through this time with the same faith, the same fire and the same desire to sustain and help the Congregation in its present history.

The three phases were divided as follows:

<p>1st phase 14 September 2021-2022</p>	<p>It will be a preparatory year during which, on the 14th of each month, we will commemorate some of the events experienced by Sr Crocifissa and Sr Pia while they await the Reactivation. That is, we will remember those moments, starting from the suppression, in which they were able to read the will of God in the incomprehensible and difficult events. In fact, the theme that will guide us will be the one already indicated on the heading of the circular letter addressed by Sr. Crocifissa to Sr. Pia on March 18, 1867: <i>It seems that God wants us there... in Signa!</i></p>
<p>2nd phase 14 September 2022-2023</p>	<p>This is the commemorative year during which we will praise God for the great gift of the Reactivation. In this year we will commemorate the first steps of the Reactivation. We will see that they were not easy and that the Sisters had to face new challenges and seek new ways of discovering and implementing the Will of God. Certainly the presence of Don Giuseppe Fiammetti constituted the most significant gift and a sign of divine blessing in this period. This year we will be accompanied by the expression addressed by Sr. Crocifissa to Maria Maddalena's son Gino Capponi on April 6, 1868: <i>If God helps me, as I hope, I will reactivate the Passionists, so greatly loved by the Foundress.</i></p>
<p>3rd phase 14 September 2023-2024</p>	<p>The commemoration of this year will be carried out in the spirit of gratitude but above all in the commitment of personal and community life to a growth in the identity as consecrated Passionists and in the sense of belonging to the Congregation. We learn this from the Sisters of the "<i>first hour of Reactivation</i>" after the sudden death of Sr. Crocifissa. Encouraged by Don Giuseppe Fiammetti who, by God's will became the "Father", they all lived this "night" in the light of the Passion of Christ: <i>Let us move forward! Faith, Passion of Jesus and forward!</i> We are certain that this will help each one of us to become Passionist consecrated women who are called to repair the breaches of sin and to rebuild paths of hope to travel on the roads of the world. The Congregation still needs "<i>living stones</i>".</p>

The three expressions will accompany us every year in all our initiatives.

I would also like to remind you that other important dates are also included in the heart of these celebrations:

- On **November 11, 2021** we will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Maria Maddalena.
- On **July 20, 2022** we will commemorate an event in our history, specifically the letter of encouragement sent by Pope Pius VII to Maria Maddalena in response to the *Advises of 1822*.

These events will be integrated into the preceding celebrations and the committee will prepare the materials for the Congregation. It is clear that each reality is also free to take other celebration initiatives and of course, to share them. What we will indicate are those common to everyone.

I would therefore like to communicate a number of initiatives that are being elaborated and will be sent to the entire Congregation as soon as possible:

- A Para-liturgy for the upcoming 14th of September, marking the commencement of the preparatory year.
- A series of common prayer intentions for the 14th of each month that will be accompanied with historical highlights.
- The novena to St. Paul of the Cross with which we will commemorate his "active presence" in our history.
- A time of prayer in preparation for the date of the birth-baptism of Maria Maddalena (November 11 and 12, 1771-2021) and the anniversary of the Pope's letter to the Foundress (July 20, 1822-2022).
- A more direct communication will be made with the Province of Addolorata and with the community of Signa, starting with the Institutions, for possible initiatives in the area.

I encourage all the Sisters and laity of the CLP to grasp the beauty and depth of these commemorative moments. It is about our history, the history into which our personal history is woven and acquires meaning. It is our DNA, our experience, and we are all responsible for it. It is essential that we pause, reflect and share, even with simplicity, the "Passionist" values that flow from the events that we will encounter.

History is not simply about remembering dates, history is lived, it is about the life given and the price paid for that Life. Of our history, it is important to grasp the "fire" of love for the Charism that the Sisters of the Reactivation supported by Don Fiammetti, have nurtured in order to transmit it to future generations, to us. The Sisters of the Reactivation, in addition to the difficult moment of the Reactivation had experienced and accepted hard decisions in their regard and yet knew how to walk with courage and faith in the silent and providential action of God.

This is what the Lord asks of us today, in this complex time for the Church and humanity.

Pope Francis, addressing to the religious, has affirmed several times that fidelity to the Charism does not require that it be conserved like precious objects in a museum.¹ Authentic fidelity rather asks us to be open to *the newness of the Spirit and to the new things* that need to be done so that the gift of the Charism entrusted to us today may be incarnated, visible, and effective for us and for those to whom we are sent. It is clear that this also requires the ability to die to what may give us apparent security, but the lesson of the Reactivation is precisely this: if Sr. Crocifissa and Sr. Pia had not had the courage to die to the past in order to open themselves to the newness of the Spirit, the Congregation would no longer exist and we would not be here today to praise and thank for this history of grace.

I wish each one of us the gift of conversion and openness of heart so that this history of grace may continue to be a sign of mercy of the *Crucified Lord and of Our Lady of Sorrows* for humanity to whom we are sent.

Greetings and fraternal embrace on behalf of the Sisters of the General Council.



Sr. Marie Dalessandro CP

Sr. Maria Dalessandro, CP
General Superior

¹ Charism is not a museum piece, which remains intact in a showcase... No, the charism... must be opened and allowed to go out, so that it enters into contact with reality, with people, with their anxieties and problems... It would be a grave error to think that the charism is kept alive by concentrating on external structures, on schemes, on methods, on the form. God keep us from the spirit of functionalism! "(POPE FRANCIS, Audience to the priests and religious of Schönstatt, 3/9/15).

The meaning of the slogan and the logo of the Jubilee of the Reactivation

The slogan that will guide us through the next three years is centered on the image of fire. The Word of God from the very beginning of the Old Testament refers to *fire* with a series of multiple meanings. Starting from *the flaming sword of the Archangel Michael* that guards Eden, we can recall *the fire of the burning bush* contemplated by Moses, the *pillar of fire* that guides the people of Israel towards the Promised Land, *the burning fire that burned with zeal* the young Jeremiah... to the *fire of Pentecost*.

Even Jesus in his teaching uses the image of fire and once points to it as a symbol of His imminent Passion as recounted in Lk . 12:49-50: "*I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!*"

In the vehement desire of Jesus to carry out the plan of the Father, we read again the ardent desire of Sr. Crocifissa Tognoni to carry out the plan of the Reactivation, as she had written to Gino, son of Maria Maddalena, on April 6, 1868, two years after the suppression: "*If you go, as usual, to visit the mortal remains of my beloved and dear Foundress, tell her that if God helps me, as I hope, I will reactivate the Passionist Sisters so greatly loved by her*".

It was this fire that guided Sr. Crocifissa to face trials, difficulties and humiliations in order to reach the goal of Reactivation. The Lord pointed out to her the new land to which she was to go, Signa, and placed beside her a faithful companion, Sr Pia with whom she shared a burning zeal for the Crucified One and for souls.

And on the highest mountain of Signa, at Castel di Signa, the Passionists guided by her, set up their new home: the Mother House from which the new adventure of the reactivated *Passionist Sisters of St. Paul of the Cross* begins. The flame of the *memoria passionis* rekindles from the ashes and becomes light, hope and mercy for the world, signified by the multicolored flame. ***Today this fire is entrusted to each one of us.***