



Curia Generalizia

Figlie della Carità Canossiane – Roma

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CHE "AMANO SENZA MISURA"
RICONFIGURAZIONE A UNA VITA DI SANTITÀ NELLA E PER LA MISSIONE, OGGI

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Rome, May 22, 2022

I give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you... By this love they will know that you are my disciples. (Jn 13:34-35)

Dear Sisters,

Before completing my mandate, I would like to give thanks to the Lord for these years spent at the service of the Institute and to share some reflections with you.

I thank the Lord because **in his goodness and fidelity he has blessed and blesses the Institute. I thank him for your fidelity as evangelical women**, for being **women who are integrated and coherent with your choice** of life, for the **missionary enthusiasm** that characterizes you and which did not diminish in the most difficult moments we have had to face.

The first six years were spent in the realization of what was planned by the XVI General Chapter. At the end of the sexennium, when all the preparation was ready for the celebration of the XVII General Chapter, the pandemic put a stop to it.

It was an unexpected and unknown phenomenon that overwhelmed the world, Nations, Institutions and spared no one. All of humanity was involved in these tragic events. Initially we were surprised, we stopped, we wondered how to proceed. We felt the need to hear out other Congregations and Institutions, and so also with you, to consult you, and then to resume the journey.

Many of our Organisms have changed their ways of proceeding and have adapted their responses to the most urgent needs of the time.

From February 2022, unfortunately, we have the additional crisis of the war in Europe, something unthinkable, even though the possibility of an impending war had been announced several times.

Europe, a world that, unlike many others, seemed to live in maximum security has now been shaken; experiencing fear, uncertainties, death, destruction. How many unexpected and unforeseen events!

"The Church of God, convoked in Synod", invites all to make a planetary reflection to deepen and respond to the needs of the world and to walk together, reflecting on the theme: "For a synodal Church: communion, participation, mission."

This excerpt is taken from Synod 2021-2023 preparatory document: **"A synodal Church is a prophetic sign"**, above all for a community of Nations incapable of proposing a shared project, through which to pursue the good of all. Practicing synodality is today for the Church the most evident way to be **"sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race"** (LG 1). (Synod 2021 - 2023 preparatory document).

We too share in this trajectory and we are also part of the journey characterized by union with God, fraternal communion and the mission that radiates and is realized in the service to our brothers and sisters, respecting the different cultural peculiarities.

The theme of the Plenary Assembly of the Superior Generals, held in the first week of May 2022, was: "Embracing vulnerability in the synodal journey."

The in-depth study of the theme touched me deeply and gave me joy. We used to emphasize the importance of leadership, the characteristics of the leader ..., but until now we had not spoken about the importance of becoming aware of "vulnerability", the ontological reality of our being, which cannot be ignored. I felt a special presence of the Spirit that led us to understand, to highlight religious life as a minority: simple and poor and at the same time strong and testimonial because it is rich in the presence of the Spirit.

Vulnerability, which is intrinsic to our being, to our deepest personal reality, to the reality of the Institute, to the Church and to the whole human family, was strongly emphasized. Synodality was also presented in this light.

Pope Francis invited us to carry out a process of connection, of receptive listening that creates spaces for understanding, conversion and growth. He reminded us that each of us always has a small piece of truth to share and to learn. It is important to be aware of one's own fragility yet at the same time confident. "God, in fact, did not give us a Spirit of timidity, but of strength, charity and prudence." (2Tim 1: 6-14)

While the speakers were presenting, I seemed to hear the same language of Magdalene and I thought how she was in tune with this trend of thoughts.

The Foundress often mentions our "minimal Institute", not as to retreat or to avoid actions, but to respond to the signs of the times with patience, conviction, trust, courage. When she speaks of the virtue of humility she says: *"They should not believe, however, that*

Holy Humility leads them to discouragement and delay in the service of God, on the contrary, the special effect of this virtue, when it is real, is to inspire the most lively confidence in God." (UR p. 240)

She did not feel like a "great woman", but she was convinced that her vulnerability was the necessary space for God to act in the accomplishment of the mission that had been entrusted to her.

Magdalene overcomes moments of suffering caused by difficulties "external and internal" in her new foundations and with great faith, perseverance and resilience she traces new paths and her foundations develop and respond to numerous needs of the moment.

For us as well as for Magdalene, our limited self, the awareness of our fragility are true paths to embark because they create in us that necessary space which God uses to carry out his plan.

We are going through difficult times but we are convinced that apostolic strength resides in hope. We ask the Lord to grace us with confidence. God is at work. Life does not hold itself back. It keeps moving on. The Word reminds us, always in the world something new is sprouting (cf Is 43:19) and God asks us to be collaborators in a new creation.

Our strength is faith, which arouses in us the desire to be women of communion wherever we are, to live the mission together, overcoming the tensions and difficulties that somehow hinder it.

Life is beautiful if we make it beautiful. Life is good if we make it good. Life is generous if we make it so. Life is not something abstract. Life is us.

We are the promoters of beauty, goodness and a future of hope, starting with our communities.

Let us continue our journey together, imploring the light of the Spirit, sure that with him we can trace paths of understanding, conversion and growth.

Dear Sisters, a big Thank you and my fraternal embrace to all of you.

With affection,

M. Anna Maria Babbini
Congregational Leader