



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE TERTIARY CAPUCHIN SISTERS
OF THE HOLY FAMILY**

Monday, 25 October 2004

1. I am pleased to greet you with affection on the occasion of your 20th General Chapter, whose celebration coincides with the 150th anniversary of the birth of your Founder, Venerable Bishop Luis Amigó y Ferrer. These two important events provide an opportunity to give fresh life to your own charism and an impetus to your typical evangelizing mission.

In fact, the commemoration of the Founder is a new call to imitate his desire to live a holy life, following closely in the footsteps of Jesus, who made himself completely poor to bring to human beings the riches of divine mercy (cf. Heb 2: 17-18). In addition to strengthening fidelity to the founding spirit, the role of the General Chapter is to adapt it appropriately for this day and age, discerning "what the Spirit is suggesting to the different communities" (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, n. 23) and seeking the best way to proclaim and bear witness to Christ in today's increasingly globalized world, as the theme chosen for your Chapter reflection indicates.

I greet with affection Mother Julia Apesteguía Mariaezcurrena, recently elected to the office of Superior General, as well as Mother Ligia Elena Llano, who has carried out this service in these last years. I also greet the new Councillors and all the other Chapter Sisters who represent the different parts of the Institute, present today in Europe, Asia, America and Africa. Please express my appreciation to your Sisters who are following the Chapter with interest and accompanying you with their prayers.

2. I would like to express the Church's deep appreciation for your work on behalf of the poorest of the poor, the elderly and the sick, young people and children in need of assistance, education and the joy of living and believing in Christ. At the same time, I share with you hope in the future, in this history that it is your task to build, for "the Spirit is sending you... to do even greater things" (*Vita*

Consecrata, n. 110).

They are great things indeed, precisely because they extend the mission and style of Jesus, who makes humanity worthy and raises it through the sacrifice of his very self, his self-denial, fraternal guidance and total trust in the power of God. For your spiritual journey, you know that true salvation, which knows no bounds and is untouched by time, is only obtained through redemption, even if this is foreign to a mindset all too often concerned solely with promotion and instant success.

3. I then invite you to make your union with Christ deeper and deeper every day through contemplation and frequent prayer, and to give vitality to your work, imitating his redemptive outlook, since "the more one lives in Christ, the better one can serve him in others, going even to the furthest missionary outposts and facing the greatest dangers" (*Vita Consecrata*, n. 76).

Furthermore, a deep and rich inner experience will make it easier to communicate the attraction that Jesus inspires in the new generations, helping them to hear the penetrating voice of a vocation, just like the disciples, called "to be with him and to be sent out to preach" (Mk 3: 14).

I entrust to Mary the work of the Chapter and the activities organized in honour of the 150th anniversary of your Founder's birth. In accompanying her Divine Son even to the Cross and in joyfully making his glorious triumph present in the Christian community, she is a Teacher beyond compare, just as she welcomed and raised him in the Holy Family.

With these sentiments and hopes, and invoking the intercession of the Blessed Martyrs of the "Amigonian" family, I cordially impart to you all my Apostolic Blessing, which I am pleased to extend to all the Sisters of the Congregation and to all who share the same spirit in your apostolic work.