

Feast of the Assumption

15th August 2020



“A new world is being prepared...” (RL 12)

“In Mary we contemplate a perfect response to the call of God...

Her assumption gives us the certainty that a new world is being prepared...”

R.L.12

15th of August 2020! This feast of the Assumption gathers us once again, and in a very particular manner. All our communities in all the countries and regions are still in lockdown, although more or less strict. During this period, we have experienced the links which unite us, to one another, by prayer first of all, but also by the different means of communication, according to the countries. We are in union very specially with those who have been or still are affected by the covid 19 and we think also of our Sisters who have left us.

But an “after” presents us with the question:

What new world are we preparing?

Some words of the International Union of Superiors General⁽¹⁾ opens the reflection for us:

“When the situation around us troubles our peace and our serenity, and in facing this situation, for which we haven’t got ready-made solutions, we need discernment. Our programmes have been overturned, as well as our moments of encounter and the usual rhythms of our life and work. In all this however, we have heard the voice of the Lord which says: **“courage! I send you again to travel the streets of this world which I love. “**

Today Jesus comes to meet us and to walk with us, even when we don’t recognise Him. The Crucified and Risen One continues his ministry of consolation and takes care of his brothers and sisters.

Several times now Pope Francis has pleaded with us, in the heart of these weeks, to walk together because, as he repeats, it is only together that we can face up to the difficulties of this situation, and profit of this historic moment to give a new meaning to this turning that the way of humanity has taken...

As it says in Genesis: In the beginning was chaos, but the Spirit moved over the waters and a new world was born. These times lead us to the origins, because the Spirit which is in us, as in the numerous brothers and sisters of humanity, gives rise to a great desire for renewal, for starting again, for rebirth”.⁽²⁾

Numerous questions arise: our world and our religious life are questioned.

How can we transform these sombre moments into a “luminous” opportunity for our mission, for making our charism and our ways of response effective for today?”

Can we recognise already in these several months that we have lived, new attitudes that should be developed?

During this time, we have noticed in ourselves and around us, a desire to live otherwise. Everything is called to change and gives hope that this world can be transformed. Women and men in numerous domains have rediscovered the importance of putting persons at the heart of reality and have rejected the idea that money, or excessive techniques, or the economy would be the only driving forces of life. The leaders of different churches have united to call for solidarity, to take care of the poor and of the suffering people of this world.

Could a new world be born today?

Following the pandemic, old and new forms of poverty are spreading and social ills are becoming apparent, which make the idea of rebirth difficult. There are many that are still excluded, not only from the internet, but also from social consideration, with enormous losses, and thousands of victims of exploitation, of marginalisation.

We ask ourselves the question: how can we witness to them, the living presence of a God who is stirred up and bent over them to take care of them?”⁽³⁾

“To take care”. It is an expression which runs through a lot of our texts. Our choice of religious life and of our charism according to the intuition of Fr. Pernet, challenges us more than ever to be persons who are committed to “take care”.

“The Little Sister should have an inexpressible tenderness for her sick person because she is working for the glory of God at the same time as doing a work of mercy... few words, plenty of actions. Sermons are tiring, delicacy and discreet loving attention is what attracts and wins hearts.” 2/9/1891.

We have experienced often enough in communities, these moments of highlights lived together, and these moments of tension, of the need to welcome one another again, just as all the families who have to endure the tension of being closed in. We have experienced more strongly the importance of human communication, in the face of the isolation in the rest homes, and for many of our neighbours. We have also witnessed the solidarity of numerous young people coming to help such or such aged person, bring their collaboration to different charitable associations. We have measured the importance of **mutual listening**, of profound communication which helps us to grow mutually. Yes, a new world wants to be born.

To listen, to the nearest, as to the world at large, and **to take care**, are the existential attitudes which can lead to a new culture through a real dialogue with those who share our mission, in order to discern our apostolic choices and thus contribute to the birth of a reconciled world.

Let us strive to take care of those who are left behind, and let us also allow others to take care of us as “He takes care of us, the God of our Salvation”.

Mary believed in her God. She knew how “to take care” of her Son with tenderness and confidence. By her presence and her listening to the first disciples, she has taken care of the humble beginnings of the Church. Her Assumption encourages us to take care of each other, there where we are, to welcome and to bring to birth this new world.

Happy feast of the Assumption!

With our affection.

Marie-Françoise

Dominique

Mary

Carleen

LUZ MIRIAM

(1), (2), (3) : Extracts from the letter of the International Union of Superiors General. July 2020.

