**COMMUNITY LIFE**

***(Some reflections of my experience, from my encounters with our MSF communities around the world)***

I greet all of you dear confreres in our communities around the world but above all I greet the individual confrere, who live and do their mission alone sometimes away from the other confreres and also those who try to stay away from the community, from the confreres.

Peace in Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

I am very happy with the decision of the last General Chapter to declare that this current year as the Jubilee Year for our Congregation. This pushes us more to remember, meditate, analyze and plan our future and our mission. We want to truly feel like **one family for one mission**!

But our communities first must become like one family that fulfills one mission, obviously respecting the different gifts of its members.

Looking at our history we see in different parts of the world, especially in the early mission lands, owing to that we were trying to respond to many needs in different places we have forgotten the fundamental thing, the community, being together, praying together and doing together the mission, a real community mission.

I really hope you remember our meetings with the communities during the canonical visits, our effort to understand and heal that fraternal relationship is never created with mobile phones. There is a need for a personal meeting, for a mutual exchange, even for relieving one’s feeling but in front of a confrere.

Let's reflect again, looking at our beloved Founder the Venerable Fr. Jean Berthier for whom community life was fundamental, on our reality to change, to review our activities with this perspective; we are a community in life and in action or we are joined only by the sign of MSF and rare meetings to elect the superior or delegates.

The last two General Chapters in its respective documents spoke of cultivating community life. They gave us precise indications, let's look at them, remember them, and try to put them into practice. I would like my appeal to reach everyone's heart, I am not speaking to superiors but to all of us, because the community is a group of confreres, it is not a theory but a living organism. Certainly, much depends on the superiors, especially on the local ones, but they cannot work miracles if everyone's collaboration is lacking.

I believe that this is possible, but I am aware that it is not easy, it will cost us, perhaps we have to leave many personal things to be able to embrace the common ones, ours, those of my religious family. But believe me this will give us a real joy when we understand that ours is mine and mine is ours.

**One family, one community called by God for a mission.**

We must pray and believe in this. One of the General Vicars whom I had the joy of meeting in Rome often remembered: if two confreres pray together and pray for each other, they cannot immediately speak hostile of each other. What Pope Francis calls to gossip, too much gossip, too much talk behind.

I am aware that we have some missions where it is impossible to be together because of distances, but we make good use of our monthly meetings, one day, two days, not a few hours. Plan, prepare. My confreres need me and I need them. I have to find time for my confreres. Time with them is not wasted time.

Community life is construction in continuity. It is a living, dynamic reality, of which I am a part. I am a builder of the house where I live, of my house.

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