**Jubilee Year of the 125th anniversary of the MSF Foundation - month of December**

***One Family, One Mission***

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Dear confreres, we are finishing our Jubilee Year of the Foundation of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Family. This Jubilee Year was marked by the COVID 19 Pandemic which still continues to challenge us everywhere: be creative, have new forms of relationship and stay close even if we are far away, develop our communication.

The important thing to consider is the opportunity we have had in our religious and missionary communities to make a journey of prayer, reflection and above all to proactively remember our history, spirituality, charism and mission. Looking at all the reflections, texts of our Founder, biblical illuminations and prayers that we have done this year, we must certainly thank God and all our confreres who have helped us to experience this time of grace and blessing.

The theme ***One family, one mission*** accompanied us as a desire but also as the words that give us strength to go forward as a Religious and Missionary Congregation in the contemporary and present world. First of all, it is an invitation to deepen our religious and missionary life in the sense of developing our identity and belonging to our Congregation, as our XIVth General Chapter 2019 strongly emphasized. Congregationality challenges us to think together, to be religious and missionaries more communitarian and to continue in learning to live in community, to be aware that our local mission is interconnected with the mission of the whole Congregation and with *all* our *brothers* and *sisters* in the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. It also invites us to implement in the local vision of the whole Congregation. Certainly, that today's world, with all the advanced technologies that are at our disposal, help us very much to be interconnected and expand our communication and also our relationships among confreres, between the General Government, the Provinces and the Delegations. The Concluding Doc. of the XIVth General Chapter speaks in this sense: to strengthen communication between the General Government and the Provinces, but also between the Provinces themselves, even on events in the Provinces. All this is important for promoting Congregationality in the spirit of **one family, one mission** and challenges us, among other things, for the establishment of a team responsible for communication (Concluding Doc p. 17 n.6).

I would like to underline in this journey made of the Jubilee Year of the foundation that it is important to consider our international and universal mission, the model of the Holy Family and the new lifestyle that arises so that we can further develop our congregational charism.

**An international and universal mission**

First of all, we are an International Religious Missionary Congregation for this reason our mission is universal in being present in 24 countries where we are called to live, witness and proclaim the Gospel and the Kingdom of God. Through our missionary communities in dialogue, intercultural and prophetic with different contexts we live the mission with joy and availability the mandate of the Founder to be close to those who are far away in today's days.

Reflection on mission in the contemporary world, and which demands an actualized mission, deserves to deepen the theme of the universality of the mission and the internationality of the Congregation. 1. To say that mission is universal means having a broad vision on mission and being able to recognize the intercultural and social challenge of the present mission. 2. When we talk about the internationality of the Congregation, we want to emphasize the importance of living together, of learning through plurality, and first of all remembering that the Congregation was born international and multicultural. Venerable Fr. Berthier, our Founder, was French and began the Congregation in Holland with vocations from different countries.

**The spiritual model of the Holy Family**

From our Founder we also received the model of the Holy Family as an inheritance and this model offers us a path of permanent growth in the spiritual and missionary sense: prayer and spiritual life to discern God's will together, live our mission in community, give precedence to the mission *ad Gentes* and to the neediest places. In our missions and parishes, we are called to develop the specific apostolates of the Congregation: missionary animation, the apostolate of the family and the apostolate of vocations by helping and being helped by the laity (MSF Friends, Lay missionaries, benefactors and co-workers) to live our mission and our spirituality more intensely. And we remember that "The Holy Family, with community listening to the Will of God and with the giving of his gifts, defines our life and work" (Const. 5). This model makes an impression on our spirituality (Concluding Doc. p.16 n, 3).

**A lifestyle**

In today's complex, demanding and plural contemporary context, we want to carry out an updated mission through a simple, welcoming lifestyle of closeness and familiarity, to be pilgrims in solidarity with the people of God. In everything we live and do we want to deepen a spirituality missionary, embodied and lively. We are called in today's world and in this context of the pandemic to be signs of hope, of God's love and generosity to the poor, the sick and all those who are far away. We must also have that attitude of safeguarding nature and creation.

What is experienced by all humanity during this COVID-19 pandemic with the dimension of insecurity, isolation and distancing that have become daily needs and which seems to have to remain for longer than imagined, may wake up a new path for humanity and a project of spirituality more appropriate to our age, opening a perspective in which the human being can profoundly review his way of being, implementing and relating, of producing and establishing priorities and also to plan the future by promoting alternatives to existing models of development and progress, seeking a new style of personal, community and missionary life through the cultivation of spirituality based on the model of the Holy Family.

Finally, in this 125th anniversary of the Foundation, we thank God for everything we have experienced and invite all of you MSF to share the joy and extraordinary challenge of being Missionaries of the Holy Family in today's world.

**In Jesus, Mary and Joseph,** may we truly be **One Family, One Mission!**