



SUPERIORE GENERALE
DELLA CONGREGAZIONE DEI CHIERICI MARIANI
DELL'IMMACOLATA CONCEZIONE DELLA B. V. M.

VIA CORSICA, 1 – 00198 ROMA, ITALIA

Rome, December 8, 2025

Prot. No. 213/2025

**THE SUPERIOR GENERAL'S LETTER
ON THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Dear Confreres:

Laudetur Jesus Christus et Maria Immaculata. Amen! I warmly greet each of you on the occasion of our Patronal Feast Day. Our Father Founder, St. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary once reflected on the tenderness of Our Lady on the occasion of this Solemnity. “Oh, you are truly sweet, Virgin Mary! Was there anyone, filled with bitterness, who ever had recourse to you and went back without a most sweet consolation? Who approached you filled with worry and was not immediately comforted? Who was tormented by bitter temptations, and did not experience sweetness in your bosom? You console, refresh, help, and lift up the disheartened, the grieving, the tempted, and the depressed. You are gentle to all, sweet to all” (*Inspectio Cordis (I.C.)*, Sol. of the Immac. Conc., Before Holy Communion #3). In these challenging and confusing times in which we are living, we could all use some consolation from our Holy Mother. Our Founder went on to reflect on that day on the spiritual battle in which we find ourselves and the special role assigned to our Immaculate Mother: “the Most Blessed Virgin alone was hostile to the devil from her very beginning since she was conceived without original sin. She, therefore, crushed the head of the serpent both at her beginning and when she gave birth to the Savior of the world” (*I.C.*, Sol of the Immac. Concep. After Holy Comm. #1). The Immaculate Virgin Mary assists us and shows us how to follow Christ. She urges us “...to avoid all sin, to love purity of heart [and] to imbue life fully with divine grace and charity...” (Consts. #7).

I wrote to you last year at this time at the beginning of the new liturgical year as the Church was about to open Jubilee Year 2025. It has been a Jubilee dedicated to the virtue of hope. It will conclude with the closing of the Holy Doors of the four Papal Basilicas on the Solemnity of the Epiphany on January 6, 2026. In this Circular Letter, I would like to offer some reflections on the Jubilee Year and the election of Pope Leo along with a look into the future as we prepare for the celebration of our General Convention in Fatima in February of 2026 on the theme of vocations.

Jubilee Year of Hope

Last year at this time, none of us knew how the Jubilee Year would unfold. It turned out to be a very eventful year with Pope Francis imparting his last Apostolic Blessing on the Church on Easter Sunday and then suddenly going to the House of the Father forever. Some of our Marians in Rome attended his funeral. We will always remember him as the Pope who canonized our Founder, St. Stanislaus of Jesus Mary Papczynski after we had waited for over 300 years.

Then on May 8, 2025, some of us were able to be in St. Peter's Square when Pope Leo XIV was elected. As a U.S. Citizen, I was shocked that a fellow American had been elected Pope! Many had been convinced that such a thing would never happen! Pope Leo began his Pontificate by greeting the Church with a message of peace: "Peace be with all of you! Dearest brothers and sisters, this is the first greeting of the Risen Christ, the good shepherd who gave his life for God's flock. I too would like this greeting of peace to enter your heart, to reach your families, to all people, wherever they are, to all peoples, to the whole earth. Peace be with you!" It was a reassuring message that the Church needed to hear after an uncertain couple of weeks, especially in the context of world events, where there are so many cruel wars and the deaths of innocent people. Very few of the experts who had been predicting who the next Pope would be had mentioned Cardinal Robert Prevost, OSA.

Pope Leo went on to proclaim: "God cares for us, God loves all of us, and evil will not prevail! We are all in God's hands. Therefore, without fear, united hand in hand with God and among ourselves, let us move forward. We are disciples of Christ. Christ goes before us. The world needs His light. Humanity needs Him as the bridge to reach God and His love." His simple proclamation of the Gospel message was like a healing balm for the Church. It was a message of hope that he would continue to proclaim during the Jubilee Year. The schedule for the Jubilee Year had been prepared under Pope Francis who had never intended to attend all of the Jubilee Events. Pope Leo quickly inserted himself into the Jubilee schedule which was quite grueling. It seems like he intends to attend everything! He participates in an amazing number of events connected with the Jubilee every day. Let us pray that the Lord will sustain his strength.

Pope Leo concluded his first address to the Church by invoking the Blessed Virgin Mary. "Today is the day of the Supplication to Our Lady of Pompeii. Our Mother Mary always wants to walk with us, to stay close, to help us with her intercession and her love. So I would like to pray together with you. Let us pray together for this new mission, for the whole Church, for peace in the world, and let us ask for this special grace from Mary, our Mother." I had the privilege of attending the Canonization in October of St. Bartolo Longo who had composed that Supplication Prayer and who was instrumental in building the Shrine dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary in Pompeii. Our Constitutions, #79.7, call upon us to daily, "pray one part of the Rosary, devotedly meditating on the respective mysteries." I invite each of us to persevere in this important spiritual practice. This prayer can help us to maintain our peace in the midst of our busy lives and the difficulties that we face. I try to take a walk every evening and to pray the complete rosary.

St. Bartolo Longo has a striking conversion story. He grew up in a devout family that prayed the rosary each evening. During his university studies, he abandoned his faith and became involved with mediums and spiritualism. His involvement in occult practices led to his even being ordained as a Satanic priest. He led séances and experimented with drugs. But then God intervened. He had his deceased father conjured once by a medium. Once his father came, he cried out to his son, "return to God!" That was the beginning of his re-conversion and it led him to make a good confession. However, he continued to struggle and was once tempted to suicide in the midst of his despair. God gave him a special grace and he was inspired to promote the Rosary of Our Lady which he did for the rest of his life. His story teaches us that that no one needs to be lost forever. If God can make a saint even

from a former Satanic priest, there is hope for us all as we seek to cooperate with God's grace and to persevere in our vocations.

During this Jubilee Year of Hope, it has been a blessing for us as Marians Fathers and Brothers here in Rome to welcome our confreres from all over the world who have come for the various Jubilee Events throughout the year. In the month of October, members of our House in Rome, along with the Sisters of St. Joseph followed the Cross on a walking pilgrimage down the via Conciliazione through the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica to the Tomb of St. Peter. We were united in spirit with all of our confreres around the world who were not able to come to Rome this year. As I wrote last year, there are numerous ways to take advantage of the graces offered by the Church during the Jubilee Year. Let us continue to take advantage of them during the final month of the Jubilee. Please also remember the Sisters of St. Joseph in your prayers as they mark the 50th Anniversary of their service to our House in Rome this year. It has been a blessing to collaborate with this wonderful community through the years.

The Jubilee Year was a busy one for us on the General Curia, not only here in Rome but throughout the world. We conducted the General Visitations this year of the Polish and the American Provinces. We have also visited Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Rwanda and the Philippines. I will also be visiting Viet Nam before the end of the year. I am always inspired to see the apostolic work that our men do to bring the faithful to Christ. I also appreciate the efforts to live out our charism in our community life and in our spiritual lives. I am aware that it is not easy to fully live our community and spiritual lives in the midst of a busy apostolate. God will strengthen us as we strive to fulfill our call. We, in the Curia, were able to attend ordinations and vow ceremonies in many of our jurisdictions which gives us great hope.

General Convention

It is hard to believe that almost three years have already passed since the General Chapter. The first Recommendation of that Chapter of 2023 was to focus the next General Convention in 2026 on the Pastoral Care of Vocations. Directory #251 states that the participants of the General Convention are the members of the General Government, the Superiors of our Jurisdictions, "as well as members with greater experience and expertise in religious life or apostolic activity, who have been proposed by Superiors of the Province, Vice-Provinces, or General Vicariate and approved by the Superior General with the consultative vote of his Council."

I convoked the General Convention to take place in Fatima, from February 9-13, 2026 at our renovated hotel, *Essence Inn Marianos*. There was a General Convention on Vocations which was held in Fatima in 2002. Fr. Mark Garrow, MIC was the Superior General at that time. Before his death due to cancer in 2007, he offered his sufferings for an increase in vocations to our Congregation. We can ask him to intercede for that intention and for the success of the Convention. We will also visit Balsamão during the Convention.

I asked those who will be participating in the Conventus to read, *New Vocations for a New Europe*, a Vatican document which was published in 1998, as a way of preparing for this Convention. I invite you to read it as well. Even though the document is over 25 years old

and it was written in the context of Europe, it still can give us much to reflect on in all of our jurisdictions. Some truths are universal. The document spoke about the strength of hope which is stronger than every fear and doubt. "Hope is the secret of the Christian life and the breath which is absolutely necessary for the Church's mission, particularly vocations ministry... Therefore, we must regenerate it in priests, educators, Christian families, religious families, secular institutes, in all those who must serve life with the new generations" (#3). The document reflects on the theology of vocation. The Holy Trinity calls us as religious to live our consecrated life authentically in the heart of the Church. "Therefore, it is legitimate to ask: where is the Holy Spirit's call for our time? Where must we adjust our directions in our vocations programs? But the response will come only if we welcome the great call to conversion, addressed to the ecclesial community and to everyone in it, as a real path of asceticism and interior rebirth, so that each one may recover fidelity to his own vocation" (#18c). Please keep the success of the Convention in your prayers and let us continue to ask the Lord of the harvest to send us good vocations.

A Future full of Hope

I will be united in spirit with each of you today on our Patronal Feast Day. I entrust our Congregation to Mary, our Mother and our Patroness. Our Constitutions speak about the characteristics of a Marian, "Let the confreres, always open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and the power flowing from the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, confidently submit themselves to the guidance of Divine Providence. In their spiritual life and apostolate, let them draw inspiration from the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, imitate her virtues, and spread her honor. Let them embrace the Church with fervent love, zealously support the dead and the dying and enthusiastically and joyfully proclaim the Gospel" (#13). May this truly become the program of our lives.

I especially embrace with my prayers our elderly confreres and those who are sick or are undergoing any sort of crisis. We also remember our deceased confreres along with our deceased loved ones. We entrust them to the mercy of God. Let us continue to pray fervently for the grace of the canonization of Blessed George and the beatification of Venerable Casimir. In both cases, a miracle is needed. And it is not only a gift from God, but also the fruit of our faith and our prayers. We also pray for the ongoing processes of our other candidates for the altars. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us (Heb 12:1).

Let us pray for each other as we continue our pilgrimage beyond the Jubilee Year. May we live out our charism to the fullest. May we become signs of strength, joy and hope to this world on our pilgrimage to heaven! *Immaculata Virginis Maria Conceptio - sit nobis salus et protectio!*



Fr. Joseph G. Roesch, MIC

Most. Rev. Fr. Joseph G. Roesch, MIC
Superior General