



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

VIA CORSICA, 1 – 00198 ROMA, ITALIA

Rome, December 8, 2023

Prot. No. 222/2023

**THE SUPERIOR GENERAL'S LETTER  
ON THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION  
OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY OF 2023,  
MARKING THE CLOSING OF THE 350 JUBILEE OF THE ORIGIN  
OF THE CONGREGATION OF MARIAN FATHERS**

*I offer and consecrate to God the Father Almighty to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit and also to the Mother of God, the Ever-Virgin Mary conceived without original sin, my heart, my soul, intellect, memory, will, feelings, my whole mind, my whole spirit, my interior and exterior senses, and my body, leaving absolutely nothing for myself, so that in this way I may henceforth be the whole-hearted servant of the same Almighty and of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary.*

**Dear Confreres,**

Greetings in Christ as we celebrate our Patronal Feast Day! The above quote from our Founder's *Oblatio* reminds us of why we have been celebrating this Jubilee. We will repeat these words in our Act of Entrustment at the Conclusion of our Jubilee. As we arrive at the end of our Celebrations which have extended over a four year period from December 8, 2019 to December 8, 2023, we have an opportunity to look back, to look at our Feast Day as we close the Jubilee and to look forward. Little did we know as we began the celebrations at the end of 2019, that within a very short time, world events, including the Covid Pandemic and the War in Ukraine would change the way that we live in many ways and they would radically alter the way that we would be able to celebrate our jubilee.

**Looking Back**

We began celebrating our Jubilee at the end of 2019 in order to have a year of preparation before December 11, 2020, the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the date when our Founder, St. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary proclaimed his *Oblatio*. The *Oblatio* was the fundamental point of reference of the Jubilee. Our reflections on our history have helped us to realize that the *Oblatio* was not simply a private act of our Founder in anticipation of his founding our Congregation several years later. Rather, it was a public act in which our Founder professed his religious vows in the new religious community. This profession was a charismatic act which raised our Congregation to life. During 2020, the first year of the pandemic, our Jubilee theme was, *Consecrated for Christ and the Church*. We reflected on the history of our religious community, our charism and religious consecration through our monthly retreat conferences which had been prepared for us. Those conferences do not have an expiration date! They are worth returning to as individuals or as a group for further reflection. They can continue to be used for our initial and our ongoing formation. The General Convention which was to be held in October 2020 was to have had a special symposium on *Oblatio* and consecration. Although the gathering did not publicly take





place, the talks were published for our reflection. I recommend returning to those talks which can really deepen our understanding of the term, *oblatio* and of our religious consecration. *Oblatio* is linked to the offering during the sacrifice of the Mass. Since each of us is a mystical temple of God, we can continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. The model for our gift-of-self to God is the paschal mystery of Christ and Mary's *fiat*.

At the end of the first year of the Jubilee, on December 8, 2020, we all repeated the formula of the *Oblatio* as our devotional renewal of vows that year. It was our way of commemorating the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the act which gave birth to our Congregation. Through the recitation of the *Oblatio*, we made a gift of ourselves to our Lord as our Founder did. It was significant that we offered it on our patronal feast day, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. Our patroness always points us to Jesus and tells us, "do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5). No doubt, Mary was pleased with her spiritual sons offering their *oblatio* on her feast day.

Our Jubilee extended beyond that first year to arrive at this year, 2023, the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the approval of the first religious house at Puszcza Korabiewska. For part of our history, October 24, 1673 had been seen as the date of our founding. However, the declaration of the General Chapter of 2017 had restored the longer tradition in our Congregation which dated our beginnings back to the *Oblatio* of the Founder. There had been a belief from the very beginning of our history that our Founder had immediately passed to the new Congregation with the recitation of his *Oblatio*. He wanted to be a consecrated religious and not a diocesan priest.

The program of the Jubilee called on us to reflect each year on different aspects of our charism and our history. Thus, after the first year mentioned above, we turned to 2021. We were still living through the pandemic. The theme for that year was, *At the School of the Immaculate Conception*. However, the retreat conferences that we reflected on that year were from the above-mentioned book containing the *Oblatio* and consecration symposium conferences. The theme for 2022 was, *On the Paschal Path*. During our monthly retreats, we reflected on the sufferings endured by our members in the course of our history as they followed Christ to Calvary. That year also was marked by the beginning of the terrible attacks on Ukraine. Our confreres there responded heroically to the call to be where the need is greatest. I thank them for their witness to Christ and their service to their neighbors. I thank all of the jurisdictions which have been doing so much to help our men and the people of Ukraine. Let us continue to pray for them and for the end to this unjust conflict.

The theme for 2023 was, *On the Charismatic Mission*. I have enjoyed reflecting on the conferences this year which expand our thinking on how our charism can be reflected in our mission and how needed our charism is in today's world! This year also saw the celebration of the General Chapter in February. Each of us have been dealing with the changes that new administrations in our different jurisdictions bring.

### **Concluding the Jubilee**

The Program of the Jubilee calls on all Marian local communities throughout the world to perform an act of entrusting the entire Congregation and its individual members to the Immaculate Mother of God on December 8, 2023. The *Act of Entrustment* is the same as the one that the delegates at our General Chapter offered at St. Mary Major in Rome in February.





Attached to this letter is the *Act of Entrustment* in Polish, English, Portuguese, French and Spanish. It is a very beautiful prayer which was prepared by our former General, Fr. Andrzej Pakuła, MIC. In it, we repeat once again the act of *Oblatio*. We also reflect with gratitude to God on the history of our Congregation. We then entrust ourselves to Mary's maternal love so that we would be able to generously sacrifice ourselves for the salvation of the world especially where there is the greatest need to proclaim Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. As we conclude our Jubilee with this Congregational *Act of Entrustment*, we ask God to pour out many Jubilee graces on us, that we would be able to continually discover and live our charism ever more deeply.

### **Looking to the Future**

The General Chapter approved a Jubilee Message which can be found in the *Documents of the General Chapter, 2023*. This will be available in printed form as well as on our [Padrimariani.org](http://Padrimariani.org) website. I would ask all of our confreres to read this Jubilee Message as we move into the future. It was prepared by the General Commission in Charge of the Preparations for the Jubilee of the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. I am very grateful to the Commission for their work. Although it may seem that some of their efforts were wasted because of the pandemic, we will only know in the future the fruits of all of the plans that the Commission formulated for the Congregation. The General Chapter approved the Message and I believe that it is an important one for us to reflect on.

The Message points out the importance of the work of the General Chapter in 2017 in updating our Constitutions. The second point in the Constitutions is quoted which states that, "the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM is the essence of the charism of the Congregation." The Message then reflects on the Immaculate Conception as the center of our spirituality. It speaks of the Marian Father's school of spirituality of the Immaculate Conception. Our Marian spirituality is defined above all in *Oblatio*, *Norma Vitae*, our current Constitutions and Directory and in other writings of our Founder. The Message speaks of all of the suffering in the world during the course of the Jubilee including the Pandemic which caused the suffering and death of some of our confreres, the War in Ukraine and the affect that it had on our members and on so many people there. It is no coincidence that we were called to celebrate our Jubilee in the midst of these difficulties. Our Founder and our Renovator lived in similarly trouble times. We arrive at the resurrection through the paschal mystery of Christ – through suffering and dying.

Mary's Immaculate Conception is the first fruit of the Paschal Mystery, the mystery of our redemption. The Message calls on us to reflect on how our Marian identity is reflected in our lives, our ministry, the design of our religious houses, chapels and churches, the way that we dress, etc. We are called to constantly evaluate our way of life – does it reflect our charism, our rule of life, our traditions, the intentions of our Founder? Our spirituality should reflect our service and our faithfulness to Christ and the Church. In the midst of a confused world, Mary Immaculately conceived, illuminated by God's grace, filled with the Holy Spirit from the beginning of her existence and obedient to God's will, is the model for how we should live. Living like Mary must be our mission, with hearts that are open and free toward God, the Church and the world. We are encouraged to be open to new ways to evangelize and to change the world.





The Message concludes by reminding us to put the priority on our spiritual lives. In this way, our mission will be more effective. I urge you to read and to reflect on the Message. We can't just conclude the Jubilee and unreflectively move on to the next thing. Our patroness gives us the example of how to ponder in our hearts what we have just experienced (cf. Luke 2:19,51).

Following its approval, the possibility of wearing the White Habit has now been introduced in the Congregation with the promulgation of the Acts of the General Chapter. This connects us with our history and the will of our Founder. St. Stanislaus ardently wanted the White Habit as a symbol of the Immaculate Conception and a sign of our religious identity. We will see what fruits this decision will bear as time passes. I pray that it will be a way to more deeply discover our Marian identity.

The Jubilee Cross which reflects our charism was another great gift of the Jubilee. Now all those who profess their final vows receive the same perpetual vow cross throughout the Congregation. We also have a beautiful large reproduction of our Jubilee Cross in our chapel in Rome. We who live here feel privileged to gaze upon it everyday in prayer. May this Jubilee Cross be another sign that unites us as confreres.

The Jubilee program also speaks of the work that we are to offer to God in thanksgiving for the graces that we have received during the course of our history. The work is the establishment of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception in each place where we live and work. This work should continue after the end of the Jubilee. It is a spiritual work of mercy which will have a lasting formative and spiritual effect on many generations of the faithful that we minister to.

## Conclusion

Let us pray for each other as we make this Act of Entrustment. We want to especially remember our elderly members and those who are suffering in any way, especially those who are experiencing a vocational crisis. Let us reach out to them in prayer and in other ways to help them to stay on the course that the Lord called them to. We ask the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of St. Stanislaus, of Blessed George and of all of our confreres who have faithfully gone before us. We pray that we will be united with them one day in the heavenly kingdom.

*Immaculata Viriginis Mariae Conceptio sit nobis salus et protectio!*



*Fr. Joseph G. Roesch, MIC*  
Fr. Joseph G. Roesch, MIC  
Superior General