

Cordially

January
2014



From the Prefecture of the Apostolate
To the Prefects and coordinators of the Apostolate and Youth Ministry

Greetings to all. In this issue, almost a monographic one, I present a draft-summary of the conclusions of the five Claretian Mission Encounters we have held by continental areas during the year 2013. All the materials related to these meetings are available at www.apostoladocmf.org. The Meetings were held in Medellín ([América](#)), Quezon City ([Asia](#)), Kampala ([África Este](#)), Ibadan ([Africa Oeste](#)), Bilbao ([Europa](#)). In this issue of "Cordially" I outline the conclusions of the meeting of Bilbao and present my impressions of the missionary animation visit to the Province of Peru-Bolivia.

1. Claretian Missionary Style

By "Claretian missionary style" we mean the set of observable features of our evangelizing activity that show the "inner evangelizing core" generated by the Spirit within us and that defines our mission within the single mission of the Church.

Our Mission within the Church needs to be realized according to the peculiar parameters of the place and time where it develops, so it can adequately answer to the demands of the Gospel in the most urgent, timely and effective way; thus, "the Claretian missionary style" while keeping its essential identifying characteristics, transforms itself modifying the ways it is realized in order to suit the evangelizing needs of a concrete time and place. This

transformation is being done by the Spirit in dialogue with the Missionaries, who through discernment of the signs of the times in community are able to discover which are, in every time and place, the innate features to the Claretian evangelizing style.

These "features" of the Claretian style are not just "missionary options" but something

similar to a person or a group personality features. They are, indeed, an expression of the Claretian spirituality,

which due to its being a missionary spirituality must be lived and embodied in the midst of action, while keeping itself deeply rooted in its own charismatic vocation.

The features presented here are something akin to what "the Claretian Mission Today" (MCH) referred to as "options", a term also borrowed for our 2012 Directory. The difference is that in this case features aims to emphasize not only the guidelines for evangelizing action, but also the charismatic roots of our spirituality. It is a spirituality that links missionary activity with the personal and community experience of God, integrating us, from our charism, within the single mission of the Spirit.

These features of the Claretian evangelizing Style, like the options listed in the Directory, have to be experienced by each and every Claretian, and have to configure each of our missionary works and projects. Each of the Claretians, communities, organizations, projects and missionary actions must be experienced, structured and programmed from this set of features, that interrelated, form the Claretian Missionary Style. The question isn't to wonder if our evangelization is Claretian because we live one, two or more of those traits; a life rooted in the Claretian evangelistic style implies assuming all the interrelated features as a "system" that when organically lived results in a particular way to interpret the world and our vocation.

We present here the summary of the discernment made by more than 150 Claretian Missionaries with direct responsibilities in the coordination of our missionary work. The discernment of the features of our Claretian Mission has been done throughout the year

2013 in five meetings, each of them focused on a geographic area of the Congregation. The first one, on America, took place in Medellin (Colombia); the second, on Asia, took place in Quezon City (Philippines); the third and the fourth ones focused on Africa and took place, respectively, in Kampala (Uganda) and Ibadan (Nigeria); the fifth and last, on Europe, took place in Bilbao (Spain).

The work done in each of the meetings implied to address and assume during the corresponding week of work, the congregation's reflections on Claretian Mission, the situation of the respective continent and of its local Church, and the present and envisioned reality for the Congregation on each zone.

Regarding the method, it didn't aim to present a long exposition of the meaning of each of the features it just presents a sort of outline-summary of them, so that it is easier to apply in specific evangelizing projects.

Features Claretian Missionary Style

1. Centrality of the Word, particularly in reading and receiving the Holy Scripture.

Listening to the Word of God is the starting point of our vocation and the source of our missionary dynamism. Sacred Scripture, read and received under the guidance of the Spirit and in communion with the Church, is for us a place to find fundamental references for our mission. The Bible is perceived as a place of meeting with God, where he speaks of himself, of the People of God and about what he wants and needs from us. In Scripture we realize that the Word of God, Jesus Christ himself, speaks to us, addresses us, helps us to interpret the signs of the times and shows us the mission the Spirit wants to send us. In this way we feel and we are Servants of the Word and with a missionary spirituality firmly grounded in Scripture .

Scripture is perceived as an indispensable guide to discern the opportunities and challenges for evangelization; it is an enlightening source for the life of those to whom we are sent. The Bible is a living expression of God's way with Humanity, and it helps us to discover and to show who is God,

what does he want from his Christian communities and what would be his plan for humanity.

2. Solidarity and prophetic, from the perspective of the poor and excluded Mission

We feel called to set our life (spirituality, apostolic positions, missionary actions, organization and economy) -as a person and as community, from the perspective of the poor and excluded. To make this call real we have to approach them, so we can feel the call of the Spirit to proclaim the Good News of Jesus.

We want our evangelization to be a prophetic and liberating one, in solidarity with those who suffer persecution, poverty, violation of human rights. We want to contribute to the transformation of the world according to God's plan, promoting an ethical and solidary culture that promotes human dignity and strengthens cooperation, peace and reconciliation among peoples. We are urged to go out in search of the poor and marginalized and to work so they can feel the Church as their home. For these reasons all our missionary activity, even the missionary work that is not carried out directly with them, is made "from the perspective of the poor and needy" .

Our identity as children of the Heart of Mary calls us to live our missionary commitment "from the heart", especially in its prophetic dimension and in solidarity with the excluded .

3. Missionaries in a missionary Church that is a mystery of communion.

We are aware that we are part of a church whose sole mission given by Jesus Christ and led by the Spirit, is to be herald of the Gospel with the life and the word. We live the experience of the diversity of life forms, ministries and charisms which the Spirit inspires in the Church and the mystery of its complementary unity as gift of the same Spirit. Within our congregation we experience the diversity of cultures, ages and gifts and we are called to be parable of communion through our community life. We are a community for the Mission. This way of living the Mission as

born into a community filled with diversity, is already in itself a missionary testimony.

We want to live and develop our Claretian Mission within a Church that is communion with brethren and with God, and so we want to live our charismatic identity, in communion, co-responsibility and complementarity with other charisms, ministries and forms of Christian life. Therefore, we understand our mission as a mission to be shared with other charisms and ministries, especially the laity, as Fr. Claret did. We commit to work for a Church that is a communion of communities, charisms and ministries for the Mission. We seek to participate in the Church's diocesan life and servicing it from our missionary charism.

4. Assuming dialogue as the place where the mission is done

We understand dialogue as the process through which people are able to communicate and understand each other vitally. To make this possible we have to know others' life circumstances and put ourselves in their place, so that we are able to understand their thoughts and actions. This dialogue is not only the condition making possible the inculturation of faith, but it is also needed for reconciliation, peace, brotherhood and teamwork. The congregational community, in its great diversity, is a privileged place to experience the dialogue that leads us to find new and creative ways of mission. The dialogue within the Congregation, in the Church and with all those who believe in Jesus Christ leads us to be open to a permanent discernment of our life and mission.

As Claretians we understand that dialogue must move us to promote the reconciliation and coming together of ethnicities and cultures, other faiths and Christian denominations. Defining our mission as dialogue impels us to work with all kinds of religious or lay institutions, NGOs, governments and people of good will, with whom we share many things. Understanding dialogue as a place of Mission, also leads us into direct contact with the actual situation, the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the people of our time, especially of the poor and afflicted, to let them know that these are too our joys, hopes, griefs and anxieties.

5. Mission is always the key

We are missionaries, and this is a clear identity sign for the Claretians. Our charism in the Church urges us to always look for new ways to reach out to those who have lost faith or who may have never have it. Missionary creativity was a characteristic of Fr. Claret we can't send into oblivion; we commit ourselves to what is most urgent, timely and effective at any time and place, so that the world may know the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our congregational community and each local community are privileged spaces of discernment for our mission, for what God wants of us in every moment and in every place, but so are, too, all the forums searching for the good and the truth. We constantly look for the signs of the times nesting the call of the Spirit, and treasure the "seeds of the Kingdom" that God places wherever He wants. We leave our communities to search for the signs of the Spirit through our contact with men and women of our time, and we must return to them to meet our brothers and discern together our Mission's course of action.

Our missionary presence involves dialogue, contact and closeness to the people we are with. It also implies a constant openness to those who are not close, to inter-cultural, interfaith and inter-religious dialogue. We are called to work with all so that we can become "one with all" and signs of the presence of the Spirit of the Lord who makes all things new. Our being missionaries impels us to promote and establish truly missionary Christian communities that are a privileged mediation announcing and witnessing the Kingdom; to train and prepare young people who are true missionaries leaders wherever they go, or whatever their vocational call; to reach out to the poor and needy so they can feel the warmth of God and the Church. In other words, it is a call to be, like Claret, creative and dauntless bearers of the Fire of the Spirit.

2. Claretian Mission for Europe

From 28th October to 3rd November 2013, convoked by the General Prefecture of the Apostolate, 35 people from 9 Organisms of the

European Conference (ECLA) met in Bilbao, Spain. Sadly, the representatives of the German Province were unable to attend the meeting due to problems which arose during their journey.

Features of the Claretian Missionary Style

1. A Mission which is born of the action of the Spirit in us and which impels us to live with a listening and discerning attitude.
2. A Mission which makes us brothers, demands that we live in deep communion and care for our fraternity as the first word of the mission.
3. A Mission shared with the other disciples of the Lord and with many other men and women.
4. A Mission of solidarity which is especially expressed in the commitment with the poor and marginalised.
5. A Mission which announces the Word in dialogue; available and prepared to go to the existential, geographical, social and cultural frontiers of evangelisation.

Priority Lines of Action

1. Evangelization of children, youth and families with special attention to the vocational dimension.
2. Commitment to the poor, marginalized and migrants
3. Dialogue and evangelizing presence in areas of unbelief, indifference and non-Christians.
4. Creation and animation of Christian communities motivated by the Word of God
5. Promotion and qualification of agents of evangelization.
6. Evangelizing presence on the Internet.

Strategic positions related to the area of the Apostolate

1. Education centres with a clear pedagogical, missionary and evangelizing programme.
2. Missionary and Samaritan parishes, committed to their neighbourhood.
3. Claretian communities and apostolic positions in situations of poverty and exclusion.
4. Specialized provincial and interprovincial teams and presences in shared mission in three

areas : (i) management and charismatic animation of our own apostolic endeavours, (ii) service to other Church works and projects and (iii) front line and first proclamation.*

5. Training centres for agents of evangelization
6. Mission Procures, NGOs and foundations that support the mission work of the Congregation

3. Visiting the Province of Peru-Bolivia

Peru has about thirty million people in 1,285,216 km² and Bolivia about ten million inhabitants in 1,098,580 km². The vast majority of the population is Catholic but Christian sects are growing significantly .

I arrived in Peru on November 4 and returned to Rome on December 20. During that time I visited the following communities: in Peru, Huancayo (Kinder, Primary an Secondary School) , Atalaya (Mission in jungle area), Lima (Maranga School, Chapel of Señor de los Milagros, Parish El Porvenir, Magdalena Seminary), Trujillo (Kinder, Primary an Secondary School), Arequipa (urban Parish). In Bolivia , Santa Cruz (urban Parish) , Guayaramerin (mission parish), Tarija (urban and rural parish) Bermejo (urban and rural parish), Cochabamba (urban Temple and Potosí Mission base) and North Potosí Mission (Totoro). They are quite very different mission realities that are bringing forward solid and creative provincial missionary project.

The Claretian Province of Peru Bolivia is at present going through an important transition. The two separate delegations came together to form the Province of Peru-Bolivia on July 16, 2010. Nowadays, the new province just finished the due revision of missionary positions and has just appointed the first configuration, as province, of the local communities. Following the Provincial Chapter majority decision, the province is preparing for the integration of the North Potosi Mission that is currently under the Euskal Herria Province (Spain) management.

At present, the provincial government and the entire province, are carrying out the great task of giving shape to the new province. In

particular, the Prefecture of Apostolate will address the following issues: empowering the Mission Office and creating PROCLADE Bolivia and PROCLADE Peru; strengthening the work already done in biblical and pastoral animation and in JPIC; developing a vocational and youth ministry Pastoral Plan connected to the specific Vocational Pastoral Plan; developing a Pastoral Plan for Parishes; establishing a School Secretariat similar to the Schools Owners' Teams. Indeed, it is a time for hard work and in great need for missionary creativity

4 . www.apostoladocmf.org News

Due to the lack of space recent issues of "Cordially" did not carry any news about the website of the Prefecture of Apostolate. Finally, it is time to say something about it .

The web page has, as you can see, different sections: News and meetings (left column); Meetings of the general Prefecture and recent reports of organisms (right column); Stories, videos and photos of the Congregation organisms (central column, map of the world); Materials and aids according to apostolic fields; (top horizontal bar).

You can find in www.apostoladocmf.org everything organize by the General Prefecture of Apostolate. You can find the reports about the Organisms of the Congregation picking directly on the World Map that you can find in the middle of the page. Of course, you have to pick up on the correct continent. Just now, you can find these different reports: [América](#): EEUU, Mexico, Panamá, Colombia-Venezuela, Colombia-Ecuador, Brasil, Perú-Bolivia; [Europa](#): Reino Unido e Irlanda; [Asia](#): Bangalore, North East India, Chennai, Sri Lanka, Japón, Macao-Hong Kong, Taiwan, Corea del Sur, Filipinas; [África](#): Nigeria Este, Nigeria Oeste, Cameroun, Kenia, Uganda

It is very important that we are familiar with the meetings organized by the General Prefecture of Apostolate, you can find them on the page. Likewise, you can find the reports on the different organisms of the Congregation by clicking the related continent on the world map.

The last reports included are: [Korea del Sur](#) East Asia ([Japón](#), [Taiwan](#), [Hong Kong](#), [Macao](#)), [Kenya](#) (Misión de East Nigeria), [Uganda](#) (Misión de Bangalore), [Perú-Bolivia](#).

5. Meetings for 2014

* [JPIC&Solidarity Workshopd](#).

Februeary 3-9, Vic (España)

* [CMFBibleTeam o](#).

July 17-23, Colmenar Viejo (España).

* [Prefects of Apostolate Metting o](#).

26 julio-5 agosto, Lisboa (Portugal)

* [III Congress of Claretians Educators s](#).

September 29 to October 5th. Bangalore (India)

Roma, 15th, January 2014

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