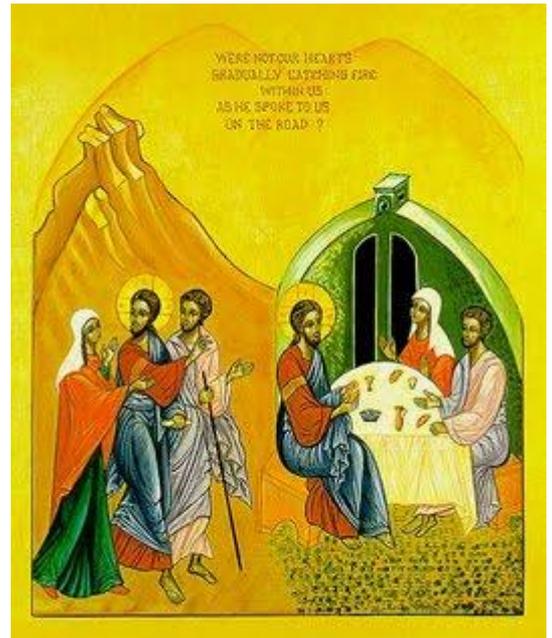


WHEN YOUR HEART BURN WITHIN US

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***DID NOT OUR HEARTS
BURN WITHIN US
AS HE TALKED TO US
ON THE ROAD?***



In the context of this beautiful Easter season that we are experiencing and as the words of the risen Jesus echo within me, I send to each of you, my dear sisters, a greeting of peace, that at each moment the greeting of Jesus "Peace be with you ..." (John 20, 19) may resound in your hearts.

I wanted to write this letter in light of the text "The disciples of Emmaus" (Lc. 24, 13-35) because I believe that in the way we want to go forward as a congregation, it is very important to be aware of and to be certain that the risen Jesus walks with us and speaks to our hearts through His Word and events.

We, too, are called to be communities who have been born on Easter morning, communities who, full of joy, set off on the road, to communicate what they have seen and heard. We too experience or can experience moments of frustration, discouragement, pessimism, disappointment ... but it is right here that Jesus comes out to meet us to clear our minds and enlighten the heart.

***communities who have
been born on Easter
morning***

In the Gospel we read "two disciples ..." The road is taken in community, being and doing as ss.cc. can only be understood in and from the community. If we look back to the 35th General Chapter, we can discover the Chapter Assembly living this experience of community: a community that in light of the "Word" set off on a road of search and discernment, a community that felt their hearts burning while the Spirit enlightened and guided them, a community full of courage and willingness to pass on what they were experiencing, a community that despite the difficulties went forward with

the trust placed in the WORD: "*See, I set before you life and happiness, death and evil ... therefore choose life ...*" (Dt 30 ..).

This experience of community, as experienced during the Chapter, is the experience that we are called to live each day. A community that needs Jesus to be in its midst, encouraging, energizing, recreating and accompanying its life and mission. A community that is able to recall its experiences and the way of God has moved through it.

A community that needs Jesus to be in its midst

A community focused on Jesus and His Word. A community that boasts of Jesus and not of its own merits. A community that places its trust in Jesus and not in its own strength. Our Founder said: "*When we are at the feet of Lord we believe we are willing to suffer whatever happens, but when the occasion arises, we are weak and it is by the grace of God that we can really feel what we are*" (BM).

Let Jesus come to meet us. Let us be found by Him, we often think that is we who go in search of Jesus but it is just the opposite. To allow ourselves to be found by Him will require something from us, openness to his initiative and eyes open and attentive to the countless and unexpected ways he is present. It is Jesus who meets us by chance. It is always the Lord who comes to meet us, he seems to be waiting for us, he is by our side without pomp, but as a companion on the way, questioning, interested, taking on our problems, questions...

openness to his initiative and eyes open and attentive to His presence

The road we are asked to take as a Congregation moves us and concerns us all. At times it may be asking us to change our plans, our vision, our direction, God's plans are not always the same as ours. But He is with us, he walks with us, he helps us to reread our history, he asks us to experience this way of being Congregation from the viewpoint of the Project of Jesus and from the action of his Spirit, he invites us to meekly go along with the promptings of the Spirit and be at the service of an on-going Pentecost for every human being to whom we proclaim the gospel.

experience this way of being Congregation from the viewpoint of the Project of Jesus and from the action of his Spirit

This experience of allowing ourselves to be found by the risen Jesus, of allowing ourselves to be enlightened by His Word, of allowing ourselves to be led by His Spirit transforms us from within and invites us to remember the past, to celebrate the present and to look with fruitful hope to the future. To feel and celebrate Jesus among us, makes the passion for the Project of Jesus flourish in us. "*Did not our hearts burn...*" this inner fire, this overflowing joy we feel and experience, we need to share. Herein is the testimony. Let us say with our lips and with our heart each day, Lord do not extinguish the burning fire you gave to us within our hearts.

"*Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke on the road and explained the Scriptures to us*" is the moment when the disciples of Emmaus discover the meaning of the path taken. In meeting together and sharing the experience of faith, the miracle of opening the eyes and the heart takes place. We also need to say over and over again to the Lord "*stay with us*" so that our hearts will burn again and we will become witnesses of God's merciful love. As Pope Francis says: "*let us welcome the grace of the Resurrection of Christ, let us be renewed by the mercy of God, let the power of His love transform our lives and let us be instruments of this mercy, channels through which God can irrigate the land, guard all creation and make justice and peace flourish.*"

discover the meaning of the path taken

We have in our SS.CC. history the experience of the Good Father, an intense experience of encounter with the Lord that leads him to risk his life in service of others "*when I left the barn, I prostrated at the foot of an oak tree that was not far from the house and surrendered my life. Because I had become a priest with the intention of suffering, of sacrificing myself for God and to die if necessary ...*" (BP) the key that gives meaning to all his experience is in this fundamental experience of the encounter with God, as St. Paul says, it helped him to understand the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge. Passion for Christ had unquestionably captured him; henceforth only one thing mattered for him, to surrender his life.

Let us ask the Lord to help us to recognize the immensity of His love, that His love and His mercy may touch our hearts. May the experience of meeting with the Risen Christ transform us into missionaries of this unlimited Love, through concrete gestures of solidarity, contagious joy, and faith in life in spite of so much death, a shared table where we feel the warmth of the "encounter" just like Jesus and from the richness of our charism.

In the way that we are called to live as a Congregation, we ask the Lord to stay with us, giving and recreating life in each of us and in every human being that we encounter daily on the road and who needs to be accompanied. May our life be increasingly founded on: prayerful listening to the Word, sharing in community and in the experience of the Eucharist, a precious gift our Founders left us and that is the strength of our life, nourishment that does not perish nor is depleted, nourishment that causes works to spring up that build the Kingdom of God. Do not be afraid, Jesus walks beside us.

***Do not be afraid, Jesus
walks beside us***