

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°27 – JUNE 20TH 2015

RE-ENCHANTED WITH OUR SS.CC. VOCATION AND MISSION



In most places, if not in all those where we are present, we celebrated the Feast of the Sacred Hearts in the month of June, and certainly in each of our religious and pastoral communities, the preparation and celebration of this feast was carefully organized. The Sacred Hearts connect us directly to the heart of our vocation and mission, since we are consecrated to them. They connect us to what we are called to “be and to do”. They connect us to our call and to our response.

So I considered it important to share some simple reflections, which can help us get in tune with our vocation and mission. As you know, much has been written on the subject of “*ss.cc. vocation and mission*” so you are not going to find anything new about the fundamental content. Rather I will put the accent on one of the features that our consecrated life should have, “*re-enchantment*”.

Sacred Hearts help us get in tune with our vocation and mission

In the previous letter for info we were invited to ask ourselves this question: Does our community life have sufficient “enchantment” and joy to draw attention and to ‘seduce’? Now the question is, Does our vocation and mission have enough “*charm*” and joy to draw attention and to “*seduce*”? In recent months we have reflected on the need to “revitalize our ss.cc. life” and we have done this in the light of our fundamental evangelical and charismatic values, and through a vital process that has to accompany us throughout our lives. If truly this need is a conviction and lived out in our daily lives, then we can say we are *re-encharnted* with our ss.cc. vocation and mission.

Need to “put fresh heart into us and give greater meaning to our life and mission”

The decisions of the 35th General Chapter, in the section on Ongoing Formation, we hear about the need to “*put fresh heart into us and give greater meaning to our life and mission*”.

Therefore we face a great challenge, to give “*freshness*” back to our life and mission; which by vocation we are called to live that which attracted so many sisters and brothers throughout more than two hundred years of the life of the Congregation and that led them to live with passion their commitment to Jesus and their commitment to the Kingdom. Passion expressed in a contagious joy, a stimulating optimism, confident hope, fruitful commitment, a daring giving of oneself and a love which became service.

To be re-encharmed with our vocation and mission, requires us to continually return to our roots, to the first certainties, the first call that launched us into the adventure of following Jesus. Only from this perspective can we live a happy, fruitful, faithful SS.CC. religious life that generates life and hope, following the example of Jesus and Mary.

The world which is enveloped in so many conflicts such as those that the media tells us about every day gives reasons to be disenchanted, to lose hope, to increase the tedium that overwhelms so many people and groups. We are part of this world and we are not exempt from getting infected by this same disenchantment, manifested in attitudes of frustration, routine, disappointment, annoyance, fatigue ... that sometimes or very often arise in our personal and community life. Hence the need to return to the only source that is Jesus, back to basics, to renew our fidelity to Christ and to his Gospel, and to feel the power of his Spirit that revitalizes us and sends us out “*I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but that you free them from evil, they are not of the world just as I am not of the world*” (Jn 17:15-16).

Re-encharmed is return to the only source that is Jesus, back to basics, to renew our fidelity to Christ...

We are sent into the world, not to join in the disenchantment that kills life, but to be yeast that raises up Life. “*You did not choose me, but it was I who chose you, and sent you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last*” (Jn. 15:16). The sending is clear and the response is urgent and challenging. We are bearers of a “*charm, a freshness*” that is not of ourselves, but rooted in the One who called us. Strength comes from Him, life comes from Him, so that we can live as He lived, love as He loved, serve those whom He served. In Him is our deepest identity. Jesus is our secret and the reason for the vocation and mission received.

We are bearers of a charm that rooted in the One who called us.

The world, our community and pastoral world wants to find in us consecrated women who express joy and happiness, who live their vocation as a gift received so that it can be given. Tireless women full of hope, who witness an inner fascination, who witness to the tenderness of God, able to convey the joy of having found Him who recreates and fills life with a renewed meaning. The challenge is to continually go to the freshness of pure water from these two sources: the Word of God and the Charism left to us by our Founders.

Today we talk in religious life about “*vocational culture*”. In light of what we have been reflecting on, we can say that it is about giving a reason with our words and especially with our attitudes to the vocation and mission received; giving a reason for having found Jesus and allowing ourselves to be touched by Him. It is about sharing: the joy of feeling that someone who surprises us every day with his love is living in us; the ability to spread our faith with the kindness and mercy of God; the love with which we accomplish what we do every day; the cordiality with which we welcome whoever knocks at our door; the small everyday gestures where we leave the best of ourselves... I think this would be the best pastoral vocation we can do and the best credible testimony we can offer to young people.

Sharing the joy of feeling that someone who surprises us every day with this love

The process we are experiencing as a Congregation towards a “*new face*” will only be possible, authentic and fruitful: if we recover the strength and charm of our vocation and mission; if we return each day to Jesus and to his Gospel; if we cultivate a strong, embodied, committed spirituality, nourished in the Eucharist, in prayer-adoration; if we experience community life as an authentic school of communion; if we open ourselves to listen to the signs of the Spirit, who opens up new horizons and pushes us towards new paths.

Let the Spirit re-enchance us in our SS.CC. vocation and mission, that helps us relinquish the vacuum and fatigue that disenchantment produces and recreate ourselves every day with the freshness and newness that the person of Jesus always has.

I wish to finish by inviting you to add to your reflection, the words of Elza Ribeiro, former president of CLAR.

*“Be faithful unto death, to the vocation to which you were called.
Take your place in the Church with the love and tenderness of a daughter,
the enthusiasm of the Apostles, the audacity of the prophets,
the strength of the martyrs, the passion for the Kingdom, the joy of the Spirit,
the zeal of the founders, the holiness to which you are invited.*

*Open your eyes and heart, be attentive to reality,
insightful to read the signs of the times or sensitive to life,
especially to life that is lessened, unprotected, trampled on,
inviting the Spirit and being docile to the word.*

*Nourish within you love, strength that generates,
puts new energy into and enhance the life so loved by the Father for all Beings.
Keep your eyes on Mary and follows in her footsteps”.*