

INTRODUCTION

Dear brother:

Cordial Greetings from Rome! As you know the September 2012 General Chapter invited us to revitalize the mission of the Congregation to which each individual and each Community is associated. Our brother Damien was proposed as one of the sources of inspiration for this. In his time, he and his fated companions, the leprosy patients of Molokai, knew how to incarnate the ardent and compassionate love of the heart of Jesus, "opening possibilities for those who had lost hope and coming to identify himself with his beloved leprous patients even to the point of death" (Mission, 4). So the dedication of Damien, "invites us to go to the people who live in extreme poverty" (Mission, 20). It is a message that is in harmony with the urgent desire expressed by Francis, the Bishop of Rome, for a Church of, and for the poor that goes out to meet them on the outskirts of our cities and at the existential periphery of life.

As General Government we have picked up on this Chapter decision and translated it into a line of action for the whole Congregation during 2014. We are proposing Damien as the icon and inspirational figure of our mission, particularly for revitalizing our practice of personal daily adoration and of our proximity and service to the poor. The ministry of adoration and service to the poor were two constitutive dimensions of Damien's mission. In his daily adoration of Jesus before the Blessed Sacrament, Damien found the strength, comfort and inspiration for serving Jesus present in the leprosy patients of Molokai.

On learning of Damien's witness, Mahatma Gandhi posed an open question "Is it worthwhile to look for the source" of Damien's heroism?¹

Gandhi's question points to the fountain from which Damien drank that made him live radically and dangerously... as Jesus. For us, Damien is a brother, a companion on the journey.

For this year, we are offering you the material that you have in hand as a guide for adoration, inspired by the path that Damien travelled.

Specifically:

4 individual adoration guides with the four stages of Damien's path.

These propose a program :

- (1) I will follow you ...
- (2) ... with an ardent love ...
- (3) ... taking up my cross ...
- (4) ... in order to serve you in the poorest of the poor ...

that you can enter into by means of any of the stages.

A proposal for a communal adoration to be done by all the brothers, simultaneously, on Friday, May 9, 2014 from 9-10 PM GMT. Please verify which hour in your country corresponds to this time.

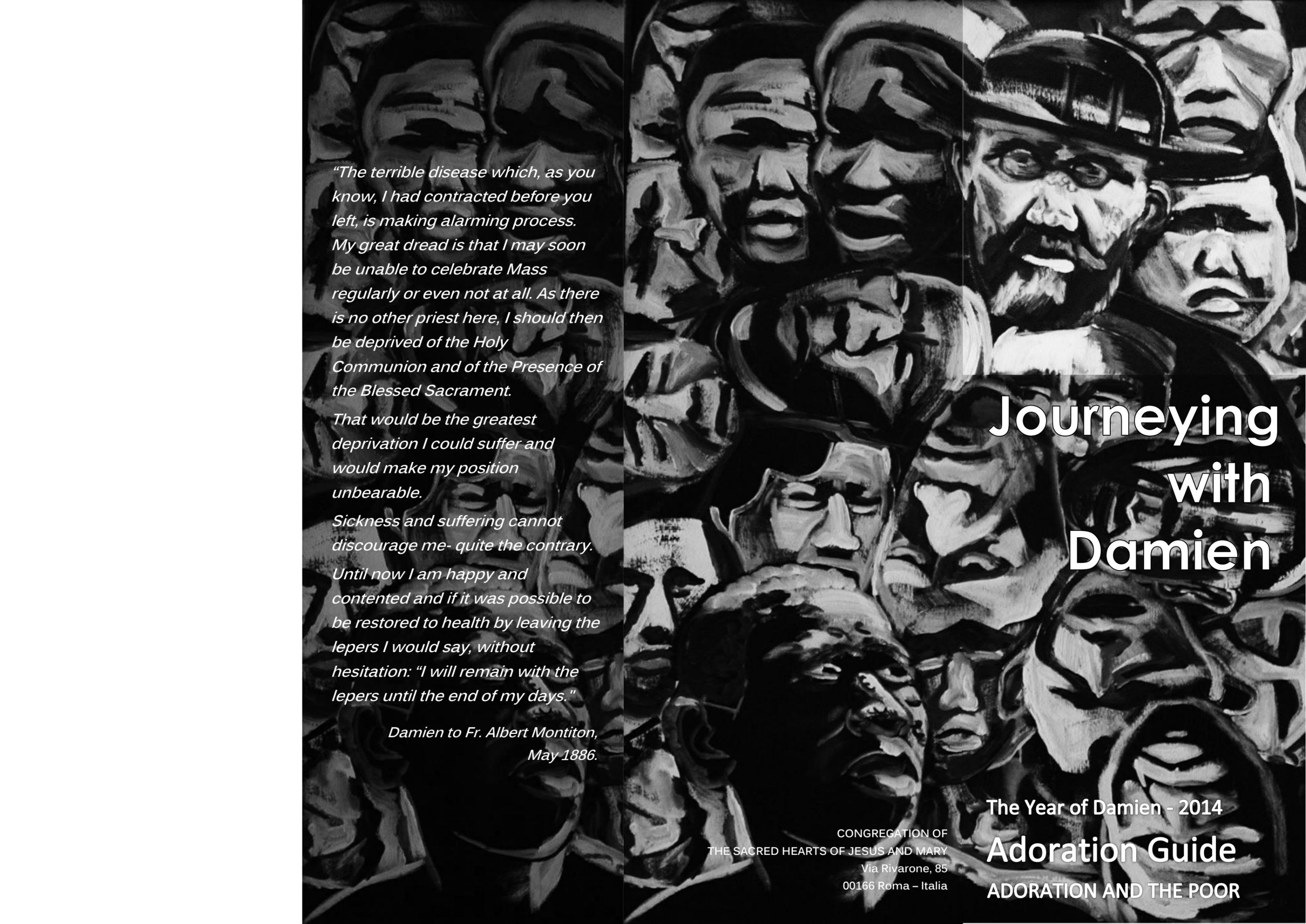
This is not material about adoration, it is an invitation to be at the feet of Jesus as an adorer, as was Damien. So this material is like a roadmap that travels through all of the basic milestones of following Jesus as Damien did in Molokai and as you are invited to do today, in your circumstances, knowing that "One's Molokai can be anywhere" (Joseph Dutton).

We encourage you then, during 2014, to revitalize your daily meeting with Jesus, contemplated in the Eucharist and served in the poor. Keep in mind that in adoration you are not alone, but are in communion with the brothers, sisters and members of the SSCC family, particularly on behalf of the poor. Take the risk of starting on this path from where you are today in your following of Jesus. May he take you by the hand and lead you along new paths to be with Him and to serve Him in our poorest brothers and sisters.

The General Government
Rome, January 2014



¹ T.N. Jagadisan, *Mahatma Gandhi Answers the Challenge of Leprosy* (Madras, 1965), 3.



"The terrible disease which, as you know, I had contracted before you left, is making alarming process. My great dread is that I may soon be unable to celebrate Mass regularly or even not at all. As there is no other priest here, I should then be deprived of the Holy Communion and of the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

That would be the greatest deprivation I could suffer and would make my position unbearable.

Sickness and suffering cannot discourage me- quite the contrary.

Until now I am happy and contented and if it was possible to be restored to health by leaving the lepers I would say, without hesitation: "I will remain with the lepers until the end of my days."

*Damien to Fr. Albert Montiton,
May 1886.*

Journeying with Damien

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THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY
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The Year of Damien - 2014
Adoration Guide
ADORATION AND THE POOR

