

INFO SS.CC. SISTERS N°70 – APRIL 20TH, 2020



WOMEN CALLED. CONSECRATED

Dear Sisters,

I do not think I am wrong in thinking that we have all been reminded during these days, of the gramaru of the Motte d'Usseau and the prison of the Hospitallers, of that old Poitou at the end of the 18th century. And once more, we will have reflected that, in the confinement of the hiding place or the prison, the Lord made history with our Founders, history that we continue today in so many places. Isolation, deserts, and confinement have always been privileged places of encounter with God. The Good Mother and the Good Father knew this too and they told us about it with their lives.

It is in silence that great things mature. It is in solitude that good ideas emerge. And there where our paths are twisted, and our plans and schedules tumble, the Lord can find us more willing, freer and more capable of listening to Him, above our personal voices?

Many of us are confined to our communities. We switch home visits with WhatsApp messages, meetings and classes with video conferences, and conversations with phone calls. We have increased our times of prayer, meditation, and reading; and we have dedicated ourselves to certain household tasks that enrich community life.

I certainly do not forget those sisters who, because they belong to the health care staff, or because their environment allows it, are caring for the sick, distributing food, accompanying people in need, helping, collaborating... How much they remind me of Damien...

The reality is very hard; the daily figures of contagion and deaths are enormous; the situation in hospitals and Nursing homes is terrible; sometimes there is no space in the morgues or in the cemeteries... There is a lot of insecurity in the face of what is coming... and sometimes, fear surrounds us. This is normal. No one is free from contagion. This one has made us all equal. And fear is very human. It is the spontaneous reaction to a threatening, unknown, unusual situation

Scripture contains many verses that invite us to overcome fear. It must be, then, that it can be overcome. It must be that trust in God can be more powerful and that hope can overcome it. Let us listen with Joshua: *Do not be afraid or discouraged! For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go* (Joshua 1:9); and with Isaiah: *So do not be afraid, for I am with you; do not be troubled, for I am your God* (Isaiah 41:10); with Mary: *Do not be afraid, Mary; God has granted you his favour* (Luke 1:30); and with Jesus himself: (Jn 14:1); just to name a few.

It is time to turn to the certainties of faith, and to listen to the Lord in the midst of the crisis that afflicts us. And it is not easy to find him where there is so much pain, nor to discover him present in the midst of a misfortune that has the whole world in turmoil as never before. But we know, as our founders did, that God's love is inexhaustible and that He never forgets the humanity He created. *Can a woman forget her baby or the child within her womb? Even if she forget, I will not forget you, says the Lord* (Is 49:15). Our consecration urges us to live from this love. To contemplate it and proclaim it as did our founders who, defying the dangers of their time, founded a religious congregation when it was forbidden to do so.

During these days of Easter, the Risen Lord has come out to meet us in a different, amazing, but very real way. And he proclaims to us that something is changing in the world, ... or that it has to change?

Will we rise from this crisis, as we did before? What will we have learned as humanity, as countries, as a Congregation?

May the Risen Lord give us the light to respond.

With every good wish.