



MISSIONARY OBLATES OF MARY IMMACULATE

The Superior General

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Letter from the Superior General on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, 2025.

With Mary, let us try everything to be sowers of hope.

LJC et MI

Buenos Aires, 8 December 2025

Dear Oblates, brothers and sisters of our charismatic family.

We celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, giving thanks to God for the graces received during the Jubilee Holy Year, which has led us to deepen our understanding of our identity as pilgrims of hope. Two hundred years ago, our Founder traveled to Rome hoping to obtain papal approval for our Institute. There he celebrated the Jubilee of the Holy Year in 1825. It was probably during the novena to the Immaculate Conception that he received the inspiration to ask the Pope for the definitive name of our Institute: Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. For Saint Eugene, this name defined our identity within the Church. The small seed that the Pope then approved is now a great tree branching out as a charismatic family spread throughout the world.

“Wherever our ministry takes us, we will strive to instill genuine devotion to the Immaculate Virgin who prefigures God’s final victory over all evil.” Reading this sentence today, which concludes Constitution 10 of our Rules, challenges us as missionaries. Our times are marked by a shocking degradation that endangers the existence of humanity and the planet. The 37th General Chapter calls us to “offer hope to a broken world suffering from war, poverty, and the degradation of creation” (PHC 10). It seems that in the last three years the world has become even more broken, and at times we are overcome with discouragement at the immensity of the task of halting the evil that destroys the universal fraternity desired by God. What hope can we offer in the face of the wars that ravage us? What hope can we offer to the poor? What hope for our common home?

During the Holy Year, we have been reflecting on how to offer concrete signs of hope. Jesus Christ offers us in the Beatitudes a program for evangelical life that opens the way to the hope of one day seeing a world renewed according to God's plan. In Const. 11, we declare that we want to sow “the Beatitudes in the heart of the world,” that is, even at the risk of being persecuted and going against the current; to sow dignity where there is poverty; consolation where there is weeping; humility where there is pride; meekness where there is violence; mercy where there is hatred and sin; purity of heart where egocentrism and hedonism obscure the presence of God; peace where there is war; and hunger and thirst for

human and divine justice where it is absent. It is fitting that, at the end of the Jubilee Year, we ask ourselves, as individuals, as a community, and as an institution, if we are better sowers of hope, better sowers of the Beatitudes.

Mary illumines our hope because in her, God's promise was fulfilled from the moment of her conception. She is a model of responding to God's gift through her docility to the Spirit and her humility in placing herself at the service of the needy in concrete ways. Mary follows Jesus with perseverance even in times of trial and accompanies and shares the cross of the Crucified One and of all who are crucified. She knows how to hope against all hope when evil seems to have triumphed and perseveres in prayer with the witnesses of the Risen One. Her prophetic praise sings of the mercy of a God who has chosen to rely on the poor to save all humanity.

What God has done in Mary, He is doing in us. We not only believe that God's ultimate victory over evil will occur on the last day, but we experience that the Risen One has already begun to definitively triumph over evil, sin, and death. He has unleashed that energy which is transforming everything to create a new heaven and a new earth in which, in Christ, God is all in all. In this sense, Jesus is the only and definitive hope for the world, and we proclaim Him, like Mary, through our witness of life and our concrete actions, cooperating with the action of the Holy Spirit to hasten that transformation which one day will be definitive.

Faced with the imminent coming of the Messiah, some Christians in the early communities decided to be very busy doing nothing. Others, however, worked tirelessly, even giving their lives, to proclaim the Good News to the ends of their known world. Hope is the driving force behind our missionary offering, which leads us to prepare for the Lord's coming with all our strength so that all may know this mystery of the fullness of life and participate in it. Being bearers of the name of the Immaculate Conception must lead us to a greater commitment. Our tradition demands that we dedicate our entire lives to the service of the mission, sparing no effort, inventing new alternatives where there seems to be no way out. The Founder implores us passionately in the Preface that *"We must spare no effort to extend the Saviour's empire and to destroy the dominion of hell. We must check the manifold evils of sin and establish the honoured observance of every virtue. We must lead men to act like human beings, first of all, and then like Christians, and, finally, we must help them to become saints."*

At the dawn of the bicentenary of our pontifical approval, let us strive to do everything possible to bring our humanity to its fullest, living the spirit of the Beatitudes and allowing ourselves to be transformed completely and in every way, so that we may become those signs of hope who, like Mary, announce, prepare, and bring about God's definitive victory over evil.

This December, I am making a pilgrimage through the Southern Cross Province, which brings together members of our family from four countries: Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina. In a few days, we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Oblate presence in the Paraguayan Chaco. The prayer composed by Blessed Cardinal Pironio, originally addressed to Our Lady of America, comes to mind, and I adapt it to pray with all of you today:

Virgin of Hope, Mother of the Poor, Lady of Pilgrims: hear us.

Today we pray to you for our world, a world you visit with bare feet, offering it the richness of the child you hold in your arms. A fragile child who makes us strong. A poor child who makes us rich. An enslaved child who makes us free.

Virgin of Hope, Oblates awaken, awaken our world.

Over our hills dawns the light of a new morning. It is the day of salvation that is drawing near. Over the people who walked in darkness, a great Light has shone.

That light is the Lord whom you gave us, long ago, in Bethlehem, at midnight.

We want to walk in hope. Mother of the Poor: there is much misery among us. Material bread is lacking in many homes. The bread of truth is lacking in many minds. The bread of love is lacking in many people. The Bread of the Lord is lacking in many communities.

You know poverty and you lived it. Give us the soul of the poor so that we may be happy. Relieve the misery of our bodies and root out from the hearts of so many the selfishness that impoverishes.

Lady of Pilgrims: we are the People of God. We are the Church on pilgrimage toward Easter. May the Bishops have a father's heart. May the priests be God's friends to all people. May the religious show the anticipated joy of the Kingdom of Heaven. May the laity be witnesses before the world of the Risen Lord. And may we walk together with all people, sharing their anxieties and hopes.

May the peoples of our world advance toward their integral liberation along the paths of peace and justice.

Our Immaculate Lady: enlighten our hope, alleviate our poverty, journey with us toward the Father. Amen.

Happy Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Your brother and fellow pilgrim of hope in communion.



Luis Ignacio Rois Alonso, OMI
Superior general