

**Video Message of the Superior General
for the 207th Anniversary of the Birth of Our Congregation**

January 25, 2023.

MAKE OUR HOUSES MISSIONARY HOMES FOR THE POOR.

Dear pilgrims, Oblates and members of the charismatic family.

January 25, 1816 is considered the date of the beginning of our missionary family in Aix. In these days, the central government and the directors of the general services, we are walking together to put into practice the inspirations of our last General Chapter. Putting the Chapter into practice is the best way to celebrate the 207th anniversary of our birth.

For St. Eugene and for those of us who consider ourselves members of his family, the house of Aix is the place to which we must always return to find our identity. If its walls speak to us today, it is because those men knew how to make it a true missionary home. This is also our task: that our houses become missionary homes, open to the poor.

The General Chapter asks us to take care of our common home, our Congregation. The call to deepen our interdependence reminds us that we are in the same boat together. On the one hand, what we do at the local level affects the whole of our family and on the other hand, everything that others do and live belongs to us. Each one of us is called to put into practice what the Chapter asks of us. Do we help each other exchange our "Chapter dreams" and begin to make them a reality?

One of St. Eugene's dreams was to think of ourselves as "the most united family on earth". In order to be so, he left us his testament: "Charity among yourselves and outside zeal for". Each community is invited to make this dream come true. We know that just living in the same house is not enough to live an authentic evangelical fraternity. The Constitutions and Rules are the road map for living the Gospel in apostolic communities. Living the Constitutions and Rules, let us walk together, so that our houses become welcoming homes, especially for the poorest and the most vulnerable. Let us also go out to the roads to make them a habitable home where hope is reborn.

For our houses to be authentic missionary homes "we must help one another to find joy and happiness in our community life and our apostolate" (C.29). What a beautiful task! It is also my mission that the pilgrim who accompanies me on the way finds joy in his life. Let us help each other to be joyful pilgrims of hope in communion, so that we may be the holy missionaries that the Founder dreamed of.

Do you dare to walk with us? May Mary Immaculate and St. Eugene give us this grace. Let's go!