

**Address of the Superior General
delivered during the Audience of the Holy Father
with participants in the 37th General Chapter
3rd of October 2022**

Holy Father, and our father, Pope Francis,

The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in our 37th General Chapter greet you warmly and with great gratitude for receiving us today in this audience. We come to express our communion with you and with the entire Church. We are 78 Capitulars engaged in evangelizing the poor and most abandoned people in 70 countries around the world. We are inspired by the charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod who founded us in Aix en Provence, France in 1816. The theme for our General Chapter, Pilgrims of Hope in Communion, has been a very rich source of reflection, motivation and call to conversion for our missionary lives.

Your Holiness, your ministry as successor to St. Peter has inspired us in our commitment to the mission of the Church. During this General Chapter we have been very much in harmony with your call for a synodal Church and we have been engaged in various ways in the synodal process in the Church as well as which have lived during our General Chapter. We have heard your call to be *una Chiesa in Uscita*. Your writings, especially *Evangeli Gaudium* (2013), *Laudato Si'* (2015), *Gaudete et Exsultate* (2018), *Querida Amazonia* (2020) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) have inspired us throughout our General Chapter. Likewise we feel invited to put into practice your call to work in the promotion of human fraternity and peace.

In our pilgrim journey toward the fullness of the Kingdom, we recognize that at times we have lost our way and we have not always been faithful witnesses to the Good News. Aware of our sinfulness and weakness, we have asked forgiveness of God and from the people we have hurt in the process of evangelizing. With a deep longing for our own conversion, we humbly join the pilgrimage of the human family, journeying toward communion with God and with all our brothers and sisters.

During this Chapter, the world's cares have come to us very closely: the war in Ukraine; the refugees of natural disasters and the devastation caused by the damage inflicted on our common

home by the way we live; the violence in the cities and areas of drug trafficking; the various forms of persecution, religious, social, economic, etc. Even with all these shadows on the human family, this General Chapter has filled us with hope as we heard of many beautiful signs of God's saving power among us.

Your mission, Holy Father, as the successor of St. Peter, fills us with hope and with joy. We are filled with gratitude for this wonderful moment to be with you. We are here to renew the strongest bonds of communion and fidelity to you, Holy Father.

We ask for your blessing upon us, our entire Congregation, and all the laity, religious men and women, and priests who feel make our charism a part of their lives and make up what we call the Mazenodian family. May your blessing help us to renew ourselves in the spirit of the charism of St. Eugene, a spirit of daring to announce the Gospel to the poor and most abandoned at the margins of our society.

We are committed to pray for you and we ask for the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary upon you.

With filial devotion, in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate.

Praised be Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate.

Father Luis Ignacio Rois Alonso, OMI

Superior General