

Let us renew  
the missionary enthusiasm  
in the light of the Word



Lectio divina  
*Liturgical year 2016-2017*

## **Explanation of the Icon on the cover**

In the background, you can see the Mediterranean Sea,  
the island of Cyprus and the snowy summits of Taurus Mountains.  
The ship sails the seas, which is a sending symbol of all peoples.  
The path indicates to go forward, toward the goal.  
The mountains symbolize the encounter with God.  
The ochre colour of the background, the lights and the movement  
of the cloaks indicate that the missionaries are led by the Spirit.  
Paul brings the Word with much love and tenderness as if he is  
celebrating a liturgy.

# LECTIO DIVINA

Liturgical year 2016-2017

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## Sources of reference:

Holy Scripture

Letter “Proclaim” of CIVCSVA

Letters of our First General Superiors



**Rome, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016**  
**World Mission Sunday**

Dear sisters

I come to you with joy and hope, precious fruits of the Jubilee year of mercy, to introduce the Lectio Divina of this year that was prepared in continuity to the theme of mission, which has already guided us last year. The theme also wants to echo the attitude of conversion and commitment for the next General Chapter and it is: *“Let us renew the missionary enthusiasm in the light of the Word.”*

The Divine Providence, which always precedes our steps, has given us, in these days, the fourth letter **“Proclaim”**, addressed to all consecrated men and women, issued by CIVCSVA, and centered on the theme of mission.

That Letter is the text that was used to prepare the Lectio Divina of the year 2016-2017 on the trail of the biblical texts cited in the same document with a priority to the Acts of the Apostles. In fact, *“The Acts of the Apostles show us how the disciples will gradually focus in their identity as witnesses and proclaimers and how they will find the right lexicon and style needed to live out the missionary mandate in different situations and cultures”* (Proclaim n 11).

Therefore, it is a very valuable Document to our clear missionary identity.

The Church, in many ways and through the exhortations of Pope Francis tells us that *“We are called to labour and to the joy of listening in the culture of our time so that we may discern the seeds of the Word, the “traces of God’s the presence”*(Proclaim n 4).

Lectio Divina is an irreplaceable tool for acquiring the correct listening and discerning attitude for a personal serious verification and in the community that will help us to assume and live out faithfully our charism in the Church and in the world today!

Each Lectio has three texts:

***Enlightened and provoked by the Word***

Biblical reading

***Let us welcome the directions/ challenges of the Church, Today!***

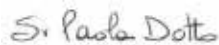
Texts from the Letter *“Proclaim”*

***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

Passages from the letters of the first General Superiors

I entrust to the responsibility of every sister and every community this necessary tool for our ongoing formation, asking Mary, the listening Woman and Missionary of the Word, to support and accompany our “going out” and “to proclaim.”

I greet all with deep affection



Sr Paola Dotto

Superior generale

## 1. The Mission of God



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

#### *Acts of the Apostles*

(Acts 1: 3-9)

*He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for “the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”*

*When they had gathered together they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”*

*He answered them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority.*

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

## ***Let us welcome the directions of the Church, Today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n.2)***

*Missio Dei* as the mystery entrusted by Christ to his Church and confirmed at Pentecost with the power of the Holy Spirit. Every form of consecrated life receives, accepts and lives this call as the constitutive element of the special sequela Christi...

We also invite you to continue writing your story in the tongue of fire in the power of the Holy Spirit. The tongue you will use to proclaim the Good News will have words, assonances, accents, nuances and facts that differ from your way of living religious life. Whether in the totally contemplative life or in the apostolic religious life ... may you always be an expression of the Church's mission. Fragrance of the Holy Spirit and joy of the Gospel in the human city.

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

To all of you sisters who work in our missions, to you who enlightened by the radiance of divine ideals and sustained by unwavering faith in God, in His Gospel and the teachings of the Our Father Saint Francis, go boldly to spread the Holy Word of Jesus Christ, ... to you my motherly words of gratitude and pleasure.

*(Madre Assunta Menard, Epistolario 1, p. 284).*

I wish you all every good in the Lord, especially the holy patience. May you labor with all your heart for Jesus and gain souls to Him. Oh, blessed are we as we are in an Institute dedicated in a special way to the Missions! Let us not be unworthy of so much grace!

*(Madre Angela Dell'Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 159).*

## 2. In the Word... God Himself “goes forth”



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of John*

*(Jn 1: 1-5, 9-14,18)*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

*He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

*... The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God.*

*And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.... No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.*



## ***Let us welcome the directions of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n. 36)***

In the Word made man, it is God Himself who “goes forth” and enters into the world and takes on human form: *«For He sent His Son, the eternal Word, who enlightens all men so that He might dwell among men and tell them of the innermost being of God»*. Incarnation reveals to us a God who loves humanity: *“Jesus Christ, therefore, the Word made flesh was sent as “a man to men”*. He speaks the words of God and completes the work of salvation, which His Father gave Him to do. ...

The God of history walked with his people and does not cease to walk with us through the gift of the Spirit.

## ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

Jesus loved men. Oh, how much He loved them! He became their brother taking upon himself all their miseries, except sin. At His birthplace, He called the poor shepherds and the rich Magi without and any distinction He smiled to all.

*(Madre Carmela François)*

The sisters you admit to Holy Profession must be willing to come in Gemona as to go everywhere. That means to be Missionaries.

*(Madre Angela Dell'Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 122).*

### 3. The Grace of a missionary call



#### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

##### *Acts of the Apostles*

(Acts 22: 8-15)

*I replied, 'Who are you, sir?' And he said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazorean whom you are persecuting.'*

*My companions saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who spoke to me.*

*I asked, 'What shall I do, sir?' The Lord answered me, 'Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told about everything appointed for you to do.'*

*Since I could see nothing because of the brightness of that light, I was led by hand by my companions and entered Damascus. "A certain Ananias, a devout observer of the law, and highly spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, came to me and stood there and said, 'Saul, my brother, regain your sight.' And at that very moment I regained my sight and saw him. Then he said, 'The God of our ancestors designated you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the sound of his voice; for you will be his witness before all to what you have seen and heard."*

## ***Let us welcome the directions of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n. 43)***

Let us not forget the grace of the origins, the humility and the smallness of beginnings that made God’s work transparent in the lives and messages of those who were full of wonder and who set out their journey along unpaved roads and unbeaten paths. For us, the origins of our history in the Church will always be an invitation to the purity of the Good News, a blazing horizon full of the Holy Spirit’s creativity, an agon by which we can measure our truth as disciples and missionaries.

## ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

«To be Missionaries is to be sent for the good of the people, or committed to following Jesus Christ humiliated and crucified out of love for us »  
(*Madre Angela Dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 108*).

«On 31 October (1865), three of our sisters left for New York to open the first community of the Missions. [...] Our thoughts are occupied in disposing ourselves to be ready when God calls us to go anywhere in the world for service of the Holy Church».  
(*Madre Margherita Lindner, Epistolario 1, p. 54*)

#### 4. Mary shows us the ‘way’ to be missionary



#### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of Luke*

(Lk. 1: 26-38)

*In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."*

*But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."*

*Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."*

## *Let us welcome the directions of the Church, today!*

### *From the letter “Proclaim” (n.92)*

Between the Annunciation and the Pentecost, the fecundity given to Mary by the Holy Spirit spreads out: «In the redemptive economy of grace, brought about through the action of the Holy Spirit, there is a unique correspondence between the moment of the Incarnation of the Word and the moment of the birth of the Church. The person who links these two moments is Mary: Mary at Nazareth and Mary in the Upper Room at Jerusalem. In both cases, her discreet yet essential presence indicates the path of birth from the Holy Spirit.

So it is for us: from *come and follow me* to the mandate go and proclaim. From the acceptance of the call to missionary fecundity. On the new paths of the Spirit.

### *Our first General Superiors remind us...!*

It takes waves prayers to know God’s will, to seek the means and gain strength in order to withstand all the difficulties that really in the works of God ordinarily are met. ... Try not to lose sight of the divine Presence, renewed your intention to do everything for God and His glory, and He will be pleased...

(*Madre Angela Dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 197-198*)

## 5. United to proclaim



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

#### *Acts of the Apostles*

(Acts 2: 42-47)

*They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.*

*All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need.*

*Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.*

## ***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (nn.26,27)***

Prayer ensures community unity and helps discernment; it is a gift from the Spirit and is so closely connected to charity... We are at the heart of the missionary witness of fraternity. An air of joy and of new origins reaches us and wins over the hearts of all who participate in this rebuilding of a new humanity... Missionary witness and proclamation in the sign of communion come from this air: *none of their members was ever in want because the community was united, heart and soul.*

Every apostolic community that wants to be evangelical holds the detachment from material goods in their heart. It is an indispensable prerequisite for finding accord of spirits, for reaching the goals of spiritual life and for proclaiming the good news.

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us...!***

Be united among yourselves, that charity and harmony may be the bond that hold you together. May the blessing of the Lord be with you and the good Jesus pour upon you His most abundant graces. Be accurate and faithful to fulfill your duties, so that the burden that the Lord has given you to carry, does not serve to make you more guilty, but rather more fervent, more truthful and faithful in the service of God.

*(Madre Elena Elleboudt Epistolario 1, p. 70)*

It would be contradictory to give affection to the people of the world, being happy with them, taking part in their sufferings, being sorry for their faults, if we do not do the same with our Sisters, who have professed the same Holy Rule.

*(Madre Carmela François)*

## 6.The 'ways' of ordinary life



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

#### *Acts of the Apostles*

(Acts 16: 9-13)

*During (the) night Paul had a vision. A Macedonian stood before him and implored him with these words, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."*

*When he had seen the vision, we sought passage to Macedonia at once, concluding that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.*

*We set sail from Troas, making a straight run for Samothrace, and on the next day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, a leading city in that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We spent some time in that city.*

*On the sabbath we went outside the city gate along the river where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat and spoke with the women who had gathered there.*



## ***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n 63)***

Paul’s apostolic journey outlines a new geography of Christian proclamation. The missionaries, who are prepared to change direction according to the compass of the Spirit, follow a path that leads from Jerusalem to new territories, cultures and peoples ... There is another path to take: the one that leads from the gates of the city along the river. Paul and Silas inhabit the world in the sign of real encounter and ferial conversation, in everyday places where life is spent without false realities and where it regenerates ... They meet men and women in places where life flows with its baggage from work, anxiety, feelings and desires, and tell them of the passion that inhabits them.

This inner vision does not fear discussion and concreteness; it becomes a new mindset that is capable of generating new horizons and new opportunities and therefore, capable of acting and transforming. It becomes generative movement.

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

With regard to those who have to leave ... they are looking forward to make the sacrifice of their life to God and devote everything to the benefit of our brethren in the way, most pleasing to God.

*(Madre Angela Dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 368)*

These are small things that small people consider them little, but they are great in the eyes of the great souls and in love of God, because they know that God consider them very precious.

*(Madre Angela Dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 368)*

## 7. The language of a missionary



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

#### *Acts of the Apostles*

(Acts 11: 20-26)

*There were some Cypriots and Cyrenians among them, however, who came to Antioch and began to speak to the Greeks as well, proclaiming the Lord Jesus. The hand of the Lord was with them and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.*

*The news about them reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas (to go) to Antioch.*

*When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain faithful to the Lord in firmness of heart, for he was a good man, filled with the holy Spirit and faith. And a large number of people was added to the Lord. Then he went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a large number of people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.*

## ***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n. 31)***

The Holy Spirit acts in the life of the apostolic community and distinguishes it, in the seal of fire, with unity and missionarity.

God’s Word, the language of the Spirit, descends upon man and leads the community of faith to use the human language, the means of comprehension of the other person, rather than imposing His language to proclaim the Good News. «Whenever we encounter another person in love, we learn something new about God. The work of evangelization enriches the mind and the heart; it opens up spiritual horizons; it makes us more and more sensitive to the working of the Holy Spirit, and it takes us beyond our limited spiritual constructs».

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

If by force, virtue and courage you were unaware, I send you to the Divine source that is the Sacred Heart of Jesus. There you will find everything: the zeal of the glory of God, or rather the greater glory, that of regular observance, the good of souls and the increase, God willing, of holy Mission, both the fire that from your heart becomes actions, words and attitudes, and gives life to all. The example of all of this is to say to everyone: See how much God loves you.

*(Madre Angela Dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 220).*

## 8. The joy of the mission stronger than trials



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

#### *Acts of the Apostles*

(Acts 14:21-28)

*After they had proclaimed the good news to that city and made a considerable number of disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch.*

*They strengthened the spirits of the disciples and exhorted them to persevere in the faith, saying, "It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships to enter the kingdom of God."*

*They appointed presbyters for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had put their faith. Then they traveled through Pisidia and reached Pamphylia.*

*After proclaiming the word at Perga they went down to Attalia. From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now accomplished. And when they arrived, they called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.*

*Then they spent no little time with the disciples.*

## ***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n 40)***

The mission is... communication of love in the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore preserve our fervor of spirit. Let us preserve the delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing. May it mean for us – as it did for John the Baptist, for Peter and Paul, for the other apostles ... - an interior enthusiasm that nobody and nothing can quench. May it be the great joy of our consecrated lives. And may the world of our time, which is searching, sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope, be enabled to receive the Good News not from evangelizers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel who lives glow with fervor, who have first received the joy of Christ, and who are willing to risk their lives so that the kingdom may be proclaimed

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

When you entrust everything to God, you will never be confused ... I do not doubt that you will consider for sure, steadfast will of God any command given to you by obedience...

When God chooses someone for a specific office, it is most certain that she receives all the help necessary for this purpose...

Receive from the hands of God, the cross that He himself puts on your shoulders. As you already know, He is with those who suffer, so you do not lose heart.

*(Madre Angela Dell'Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 43-45).*

Can you think that the devil, expecting much growth of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, did not do everything possible to disturb him and give birth to the opposition to the good work? Yes of course! Well you have to arm yourself with patience, but do not lose courage!

*(Madre Angela Dell'Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 71).*

## 9. The humility of a missionary



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of Matthew*

( Mt 13: 3-9. 19-24 )

*“A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots.*

*Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold. Whoever has ears ought to hear.”*

*... The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away.*

*The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.”*

*He proposed another parable to them. “The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field.*

***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

***From the letter “Proclaim” (nn. 39 40)***

The Spirit decides Paul's steps and destination of his journey. The apostle is perplexed and uncertain about a journey that seems to move forward without developing what has already sown.

We are used to thinking that we have been sent to spread something that belongs to us that has been entrusted to only us. Our task is to watch out for, to sense, to recognize in human places the seed that sprouts and grows. It is up to us to take care of it, freeing the field of everything that hinders growth so that the seeds can bear abundant crop. This is the humility of missionary service. The real newness is the newness which God himself mysteriously brings about and inspires, provokes, guides and accompanies in a thousand ways.

***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

Only on this condition, that is, to be good religious, we will do good to the children, the girls, the sick, the old. In fact, St. Paul too says that without charity, that is, the love of God, our works do not bear fruit. Useless then would our effort be, if we do not give to the world good example with a reserved conduct, modest and humble. Let us not be proud of our actions.  
(*Madre Carmela François*)

## 10. Missionaries according to Christ



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of Matthew*

*(Mt 9:18-25,35-36)*

*While he was saying these things to them, an official came forward, knelt down before him, and said, "My daughter has just died. But come, lay your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus rose and followed him, and so did his disciples.*

*A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak.*

*She said to herself, "If only I can touch his cloak, I shall be cured." Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, "Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you." And from that hour the woman was cured.*

*When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the crowd who were making a commotion, he said, "Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping." And they ridiculed him.*

*When the crowd was put out, he came and took her by the hand, and the little girl arose...*

*Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd.*



## *Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!*

### *From the letter “Proclaim” (n.15,16)*

Let us contemplate Christ, missionary of the Father, to proclaim in His way. We must enter into the dynamic of seeing, of being moved to compassion and acting-attitudes that characterized the life and mission of Christ.

Seeing means paying attention to what happens in the world and being open to the reality that surrounds us, not only out of mere curiosity but in order to recognize God’s appearance in history. Being moved to compassion means living with depths of mercy; it requires participation and action for those who are on the edge and who are in need...

We learn from the Lord himself, who would stop along the way to be with the people, listened to them and was with pity... From Him we must learn the loving gaze with which he reconciled men with the Father and with themselves, communicating to them that power which alone is able to heal the whole person.

## *Our first General Superiors remind us... !*

Since we are all cherished daughters of the Sacred Heart, let us imitate Him, this blessed Heart in meekness, charity, humility and obedience. May His Heart be our book, the book to be studied constantly, to learn all the virtues that we must practice daily...

If we do this, we will live as true brides of the Sacred Heart and we will be certain to exhale our last breath in this adorable Heart, which will be our joy, our reward for all eternity.

*(Madre Assunta Menard, Epistolario 1, p. 284).*

## 11. Missionaries to reveal the Heart of God



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of Matthew*

(Mt. 25:34-40)

*Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'*

*Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?*

*When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?*

*When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'*

## ***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

***From the letter “Proclaim” (nn. 15,16)***

We are called to experience the quiver of those who dissent deep down because of wounded and unfair justice and an arrogant violence that kills, abuses, cancels and marginalizes: «The Church» Paul VI affirms, «cut to the quick by this cry, asks each and every man to hear his brother’s plea and answer it lovingly».

We are called to carry out actions that ignite hope and tell the story of salvation. Without acting, seeing and being moved to compassion remain good intentions and vague emotions.

## ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

Let us consider together also the love of Jesus for His Eternal Father and the love He showed into the mystery of His birth and then let us imitate Him.  
(*Madre Carmela François*)

You need to work hard for God...

Oh! May He give us the strength to sacrifice ourselves for Him and become victims for His glory and the good of souls ...

(*Madre Angela Dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2b, p. 198*).

## 12. The missionary on the side of the least



### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of John*

(Jn 6: 1-12)

*After this, Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee (of Tiberias). A large crowd followed him, because they saw the signs he was performing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. The Jewish feast of Passover was near. When Jesus raised his eyes and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?"*

*He said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little (bit)." One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves 6 and two fish; but what good are these for so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people recline." Now there was a great deal of grass in that place. So the men reclined, about five thousand in number.*

*Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to those who were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted. When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted."*

## ***Let us welcome the challenges of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n 77)***

Few things evoke admiration, surprise and interest like seeing consecrated men and women beside people who have nothing, beside those who are considered to be the last, the rejected of society...

The preferential option for the poor that configured the life and mission of Jesus... All of us are asked to have attention that goes beyond sociological analysis and to invoke passion and compassion. “Serving the poor is an act of evangelization and, at the same time, a seal of Gospel authenticity and a catalyst for permanent conversion in the consecrated life, since, as Saint Gregory the Great says, “when charity lovingly stoops to provide even the smallest needs of our neighbour, then does it suddenly urge upwards to the highest peaks. And when in great kindness it bends to the most extreme needs, then with much vigour does it resume its soaring to the heights”.

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

May God Bless you giving the means and help to do so much good to the poor girls; give yourselves always willingly and fervently, for God’s sake, who does not leave unpaid a glass of water given in His name ... Animate your daughters in Jesus Christ to carry with newness and joy the Lord’s yoke.

*(Madre Angela dell’Angelo, Epistolario 2a, p. 75).*

### 13. Witnesses of holiness



#### *Enlightened and provoked by the Word*

*From the Gospel of Luke*

(Lk. 6:20-23)

*And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven.*

## ***Let us welcome the directions of the Church, today!***

### ***From the letter “Proclaim” (n 41)***

Missions more than diakonia and apostolic works; it covers all dimensions of our life of special consecration that is called to «become mission», to become the proclamation of the Good News of the Kingdom of God and the recognition and prophecy of its silent presence among us. Consecrated men and women at the deepest level of their being are caught up in the dynamism of the Church's life, which is thirsty for the divine Absolute and called to holiness. It is to this holiness that they bear witness.

They embody the Church in her desire to give herself completely to the radical demands of the beatitudes. By their lives, they are a sign of total availability to God, the Church and the brethren. As such, they have a special importance in the context of the witness which, as we have said, is of prime importance in evangelization.

We participate in the Church's mission in full, overcoming the limits of our Institutes. Every form of consecrated life is therefore called to make what the Church endorses and indicates as her mission in the modern world visible in its life and good works.

### ***Our first General Superiors remind us... !***

«This is the inheritance for the Missionaries:” Working with alacrity every day for God's sake, to sanctify themselves and help others ».

(*Madre Angela dell'Angelo, Epistolario 2a, p. 361*).

## INVOCATION PRAYERS BEFORE THE LECTIO DIVINA



1. *Lord Jesus Christ, today your light shines in us, source of life and joy!  
Send the Spirit of love and truth, so that we may discover and interpret  
in the light of the Word, the signs of your divine presence in our world.  
May we welcome these signs in faith that we may always live in the joy  
of your presence among us. Amen*
2. *Lord Jesus, send us the Spirit that we may read your Word free  
of all prejudice,  
so that we may meditate your proclamation in its integrity  
and not selectively,  
so that we may pray that we may grow in communion with you and  
with our brothers and sisters, so that we may, finally, act,  
contemplating the reality that we are living this day  
with your feelings and with your mercy. You who live with the Father  
and who grants us Love. Amen.*
3. *Holy Father, through Jesus your Son, the Word made flesh for us,  
send me your Holy Spirit, that my ears may be opened to hear  
the "letter of love" that you have written to me and enlighten my mind  
that I may understand it in depth.  
Make my heart docile that it may receive your will with joy  
and help me to give witness to it.  
Amen.*



4. *Merciful Father,  
in this holy time of prayer and of listening to your Word,  
send also to me your holy angel that I may receive the proclamation  
of salvation and that, after opening my heart,  
I may offer my yes to Love.  
Let, I beg you, the Holy Spirit overshadow me as an overwhelming  
power. As from now, Father, I do not wish to express anything other  
than my "Yes!" and to say to you: "Behold, I am here for you.  
Do unto me whatever pleases you". Amen*
5. *Lord Jesus,  
send your Spirit to help us to read the Scriptures with the same mind  
that you read them to the disciples on the way to Emmaus.  
In the light of the Word, written in the Bible,  
you helped them to discover the presence of God in the events  
of your passion and death.  
Create in us silence so that we may listen to your voice in Creation and  
in the Scriptures, in events and in people,  
above all in the poor and suffering.  
May your word guide us so that we too,  
like the two disciples from Emmaus, may experience the force of your  
resurrection and witness to others that you are alive in our midst as  
source of fraternity, justice and peace.  
We ask this of you, Jesus, son of Mary, who revealed to us the Father  
and sent us your Spirit. Amen*
6. *Lord God, our Father,  
you are not far away from any of us, for in you we live and move and  
exist and you live in us through your Holy Spirit.  
Be indeed with us, Lord, send us your Holy Spirit of truth  
and through him deepen our understanding of the life  
and message of your Son,  
that we may accept the full truth and live by it consistently.  
We ask you this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen*

7. *Come, Holy Spirit, fill our minds with your light  
so that we can understand the true sense of your Word.  
Come, Holy Spirit, enkindle in our hearts the fire of your love  
to inflame our faith.  
Come, Holy Spirit, fill our being with your force  
to strengthen what is weak in us, in our service to God.  
Amen*
8. *Spirit of truth, sent by Jesus to guide us to the whole truth,  
enlighten our minds so that we may understand the Scriptures.  
You, who overshadowed Mary and made her fruitful ground  
where the Word of God could germinate, purify our hearts  
from all obstacles to the Word.  
Help us to learn like her to listen with good and pure hearts  
to the Word that God speaks to us in life and in Scripture,  
so that we may observe the Word and produce good fruit  
through our perseverance.  
Amen*
9. *O God, you who poured out the gifts of your Spirit  
to believers of all time, increase in we, with the power of the Spirit,  
the willingness to accept here and now, in this lectio divina,  
the seed of your word, in order to bear fruit in the testimony  
of the Gospel and in works of justice and peace,  
to reveal to the waiting world the blessed hope of your kingdom.  
Amen.*

## **PRAYERS TO CONCLUDE LECTIO DIVINA**



1. *God, Father of all wounded humanity,  
Lord of the fullness of Life,  
make our choices according to your justice.  
Help us to live forever with the poor,  
without closing the door to their cry for help,  
without going over, indifferent to their wounds.  
Give us, Lord, a heart open to your Word,  
make us recognize ourselves to be POOR before You,  
because in every moment of joy or tiredness,  
of inner poverty or full of faith,  
we know that You are always on our side! Amen.*
2. *We want to come after you, Jesus.  
we want to continue to follow you, step by step,  
on the Way of the Cross  
bearing in our hearts every brother and sister as friends.  
We want to be your faithful friends  
but you, Lord Jesus,  
do not let us leave grab by fear and fatigue.  
Inflame the ardor of your Spirit in us to adhere to You  
and with you, to give life to all by virtue of that greater love  
which embraces every creature. Amen.*

3. *Mary, Mother of hope,  
in You with confidence we rely.  
With you we want to follow Christ,  
the Redeemer of man:  
may tiredness not overcome us  
nor the fatigue make us to slow down,  
neither the difficulties not extinguish our courage  
nor sadness, the joy of our heart.  
You Mary, Mother of the Redeemer  
may you continue to be Mother for all,  
watch over our way  
and help your children,  
so that they can meet Christ,  
the way back to the common Father! Amen.*

*(John Paul II)*

4. *God, in Jesus you teach us the ways of love.  
Enable us to listen more than to talk;  
to learn more than teach.  
Help me to spread the Gospel  
and never be over anyone.  
Help me to listen to you in the joys of lovers,  
in the pain of the lonely and the abandoned,  
in the will of redemption of the marginalized,  
in the struggles of the excluded,  
in the prayers of simple hearts,  
in the tears of the people defeats  
and in the dreams of peace and justice. Amen*
5. *Lord Jesus: you call me by name  
and send me to work on this earth.  
Make me a universal sister,  
with a heart open to the whole world.  
Enable me to proclaim  
the Good News of your Kingdom.*

*Let me be open  
to the calls of others and close to their problems.  
Grant me your peace,  
show me the ways of peace,  
so that I can announce it and achieve it.  
Keep me united with You, Lord of the Mission. Amen.*

6. *Lord Jesus! Here we are ready to go  
to announce once again your Gospel to the world,  
where your mysterious, but loving providence  
has placed us to live!  
Lord, pray the Father, as you promised,  
so that through you He may send us the Holy Spirit,  
the Spirit of truth and courage,  
the Spirit of consolation,  
that make open, good and effective, our testimony.  
Be with us, Lord, to make us all one in You and fitted,  
to your virtue, to proclaim to the world your peace and your salvation.*  
(Paul VI)

7. *Mary, Our Lady of the way,  
You have walked the hills of Judea,  
bringing, in haste, Jesus and his joy;  
you walked from Nazareth to Bethlehem  
where your child, our Lord was born;  
you walked on the roads of exile  
to save the Son of the Most High;  
you walked on the road to Calvary  
to become our Mother.  
Keep walking alongside the missionaries of your Son  
who, on the roads of the world want,  
like you, Ark of Covenant,  
bring to all nations Jesus,  
His Gospel, His salvation.*  
(Guido Maria Conforti)

8. *As the Blessed Virgin was at prayer  
With the Apostles in the Cenacle  
you poured out on her in abundance  
the gifts of the Holy Spirit, grant that the Church  
may persevere unanimous in prayer,  
that Pentecost may be everlasting and that the holy fire  
may consume every evil, and eliminate ugliness,  
loneliness and burning bitterness.  
Holy Father,  
hear the prayers that your good Spirit  
places in the hearts and on the lips  
of those who confide in you:  
deliver us from the burden of sin  
that saddens and extinguishes the Spirit  
descended upon the Virgin given in the Cenacle  
and may the Church always shine  
for new fruits of sanctity and grace  
to bring the good news of salvation to the world. Amen.*
9. *Father, source of life,  
call us with faithfulness to get out of our safety and closures.  
Father, source of life,  
call us like Abraham to get out of our land and our homes.  
Jesus, the source of truth,  
send us to meet, with humility and respect,  
sisters and brothers of every continent.  
Jesus, the source of truth,  
send us as your disciples to meet the brothers and sisters  
with an evangelical and sober style.  
Holy Spirit, source of love,  
instill in us words of grace and joy,  
to be meek and simple.  
Holy Spirit, source of love, instill in us words of light,  
to be bright signs of your presence. Amen.*