

MESSAGE FOR THE PALLOTTINE MISSION SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER 2020

Dear brothers and sisters of the Pallottine Family,

Cordial greetings to you from Rome! At this time when the pandemic covid-19 has put us in a situation of maintaining social distance, we, the coordinators of the missions within the UAC and the three Pallottine Foundation Communities, extend our wishes to you with the words of our Founder, St Vincent Pallotti, addressed to his confreres who had gone as missionaries in London: *"I look at you in God, I embrace you in God, I greet you in God"*.

On the occasion of the Pallottine Mission Sunday, which this year is celebrated on 4th October, we would like to send a message to all the members of the Pallottine Family, expressing our closeness to you, who are working in the various Pallottine missions, in these difficult moments caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Furthermore, we want to share with you some points for reflection and meditation, not only to guide us in our prayer for the Pallottine missions, but also to nourish the missionary zeal in us, which was so dear to our Founder, St. Vincent Pallotti.

A Moment of Gratitude

Inspired by the following words of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: "to give thanks in all things, for such is the will of God in Christ Jesus towards you" (1Thess 5:18), we would like to celebrate this Pallottine Mission Sunday as a moment of gratitude to God for all the blessings bestowed upon us to realise our Pallottine vocation. We pray and give thanks to all our brothers and sisters involved in the various Pallottine missions, working in difficult conditions, with great faith and courage, continuing to revive faith and rekindling charity throughout the world.

In the face of this pandemic, which has jeopardized the whole world and our Pallottine Family, we are called not to complain about the failures and misfortunes, but to express our gratitude to the health personnel and voluntary associations, who are committed in responding to this unprecedented emergency in our history. On this Sunday,



we especially want to pray for all those who have lost their lives or those who are currently suffering from the covid-19 pandemic.

What is God Telling us with this Pandemic?

Today, the covid-19 pandemic is creating so much suffering and challenges for all humanity, the Church and the Pallottine Family. It is a situation that makes us experience our human fragility and the precariousness of our structures. Our missionary activities have also been affected by this dramatic situation in different parts of the world. We are called to discern and understand what God is saying to us through this pandemic, as the Holy Father exhorts us *“illness, suffering, fear and isolation challenge us. The poverty of those who die alone, the abandoned, those who have lost their jobs and income, the homeless and those who lack food challenge us. Being forced to observe social distancing and to stay at home invites us to rediscover that we need social relationships as well as our communal relationship with God”* (Pope Francis, Message for the World Mission Day, 2020).

For this reason, it would be appropriate to organise meetings to share your experiences of the pandemic, its consequences and its social, economic, spiritual and pastoral implications. On this mission Sunday, and also in the following days, we should find a moment to reflect seriously on how to face this covid-19 crisis with faith, hope and courage, drawing inspiration from the example of our Founder St. Vincent Pallotti, who was actively involved in tackling the cholera epidemic that broke out in Rome at the beginning of August in 1837.

Being Close to the Suffering Persons



There is no doubt that because of this pandemic we can feel lost, frightened and uncertain not only about our future, but also about how to carry out our Pallottine missions; there is a risk of being frightened and discouraged. It is precisely in the face of these challenges that we are called to be in solidarity, to be close to the persons who suffers and to give them hope, following the inspiration of our Founder, St. Vincent Pallotti. On this occasion, we would like to thank all the brothers and sisters who are offering financial, spiritual and pastoral help to many

families and people particularly affected by this pandemic, following the example of Pallotti who wanted to be food, drink, clothing, medicine, etc. to help others (cf. OOCC X, 15-16).

In fact, in the face of this circumstances which has put us in difficulty and in a very uncertain situation, we must be careful not to fall into the trap of closing in on ourselves, of becoming indifferent to the suffering and needs of our neighbour. For this reason, the Holy Father invites us to go out of ourselves in order to serve our neighbour: *“In this context, the call to mission, the invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and*

neighbour presents itself as an opportunity for sharing, service and intercessory prayer. The mission that God entrusts to each one of us leads us from fear and introspection to a renewed realization that we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others" (Pope Francis, Message for the World Mission Day 2020). Going out of ourselves allows us to give hope to our brothers and sisters who are uncertain about what may happen tomorrow. Socio-charitable activities make our commitment to rekindle faith and rekindle charity credible, because, as the Apostle James writes, "faith is dead without works" (James 2:26).

Meditating on the Message of the Holy Father

The Pallottine Mission Sunday is an appropriate occasion to meditate and reflect on the Holy Father's message for Mission Day 2020, which contains important thoughts: on the fruits of last year's missionary month; on how to face the covid-19 pandemic crisis with faith and hope; on how to take care of our common home; on how to be close to our suffering neighbour and how to overcome the challenges of our call to mission today. Given the importance and depth of this message, we invite you to download it in your respective language from the following website:

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/messages/missions/documents/papa-francesco_20200531_giornata-missionaria2020.html

May this Pallottine Mission Sunday nourish our missionary zeal, deepen our relationship with the Lord and neighbour and inspire us to continue the work of bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole world, following the example of St. Vincent Pallotti, our Founder. Let entrust ourselves to the maternal intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the Apostles and the Star of new Evangelisation.

Wish you a fruitful Pallottine Mission Sunday!

Sr. Bozena Olszewska, SAC

Sr. Honorata Lyimo Mamiro, SAC

Sr. Venicia Meurer, CSAC

Fr. Romuald Uzabumwana, SAC

Rome, September 15th, 2020

1st anniversary of the beatification of Fr. Richard Henkes SAC

