



SUORE MISSIONARIE DI SAN CARLO BORROMEO (SCALABRINIANE)
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Rome, December 14, 2020

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Subject: Celebration of the death anniversary of our Co-founder, the Venerable Servant of God, Father Joseph Marchetti

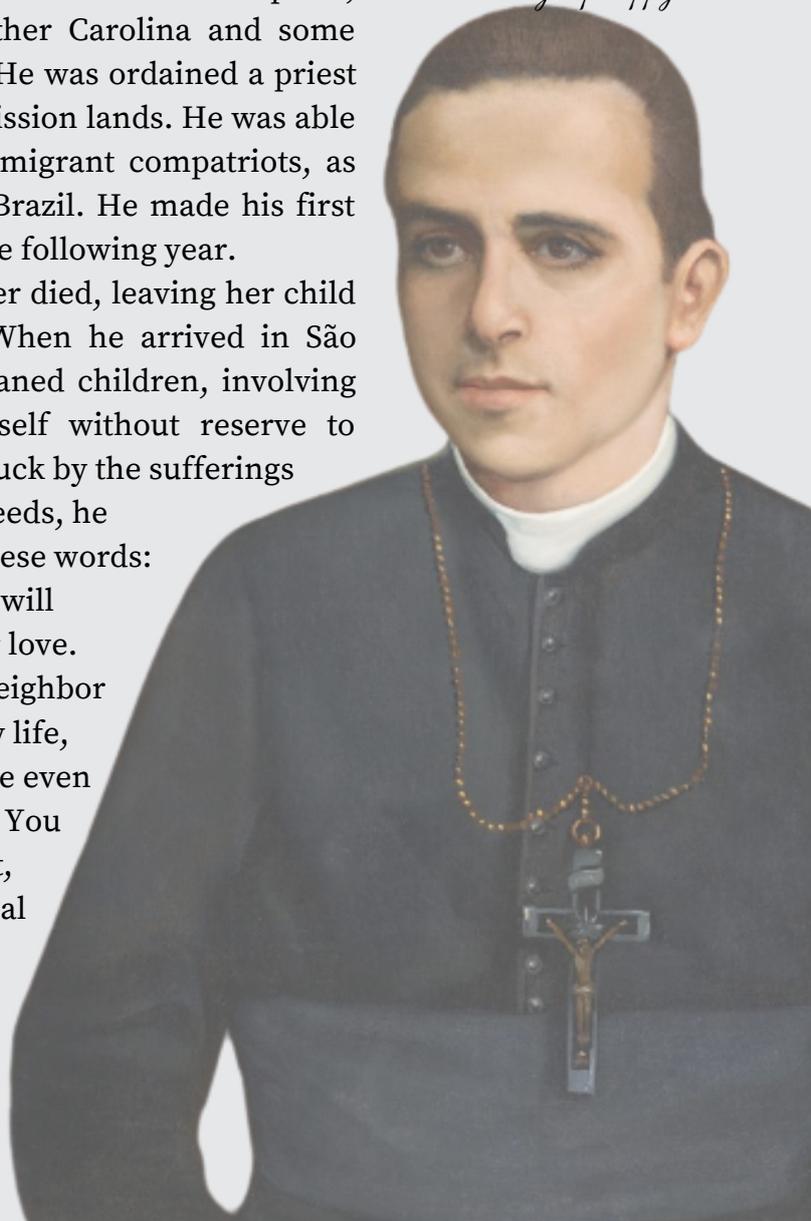
Sisters, Formands and Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries,

Today, December 14th, we remember with deep gratitude, that memorable day in 1896, when the Venerable Father Giuseppe Marchetti, who was a bright star, about 27 years old, returned to the Father. Today we celebrate his memory a few months after the solemn opening of the 125th Anniversary of the Foundation of our Congregation, of which he is the Co-founder.

The Venerable Father Joseph Marchetti, Co-founder of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo - Scalabrinians, moved by the preaching of Blessed John Baptist Scalabrini, placed himself completely at the Founder's disposal, together with his sister Assunta, his mother Carolina and some young women from Compignano (Lucca). He was ordained a priest on April 3, 1892 and he dreamed to go to mission lands. He was able to fulfill his desire by accompanying his migrant compatriots, as navy chaplain, on the ocean crossings to Brazil. He made his first trip on October 15, 1894 and another one the following year.

During his second trip, a young mother died, leaving her child orphaned and her husband in despair. When he arrived in São Paulo, he started a work in favor of orphaned children, involving countless benefactors, and devoted himself without reserve to helping the most defenseless in society. Struck by the sufferings of the migrants and given their countless needs, he consecrated himself to his neighbor with these words: "I swear in perpetuity and with a vow that I will always be a victim of my neighbor for Your love. Thus, by the vow of Charity, I will put my neighbor before myself, my pleasures, my health, my life, in everything. Then, with the vow not to lose even a quarter of an hour in vain, I consecrate to You and to my neighbor, all the love of my heart, all the energy of my intellect, all the physical and moral strength of my body".[2]

"Here I am, ready to die. I have longed for martyrdom so many times. If only instead of a blood martyrdom, I had the grace to meet the martyrdom in the apostolic labors, I would consider myself happy." [1]



[1] Fr. Joseph Marchetti. Letter to His Excellency Mons. Scalabrini, São Paulo, December 12, 1895

[2] Francesconi Mario, Come una meteora. p.44

Father Joseph, victim of the love for his neighbor and of apostolic labors, died of typhus, which he had contracted while assisting the sick, almost 125 years ago. His heroic existence and his example of holiness are still strongly relevant today, especially in the field of the assistance to migrant children and especially if they are alone and abandoned

As in the past also today, the number of children who leave their families to set out on the roads of migration, often trusting individuals or groups who trade by speculating on the flesh of migrants, is incalculable. These children and adolescents are deprived of their past history, with an uncertain future and they are prisoners of a hopeless present. The UN estimates that children are about 30% of the total migrant population worldwide. Together, Africa and Asia, host three out of five migrant children. We need to consider that the experiences lived during childhood or adolescence do not disappear once they become adults. We are talking of wounds and traumas which will mark their entire existence.

The Venerable Joseph Marchetti, Blessed Assunta Marchetti, his sister and our co-founder, a large number of Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, many Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries inspired by the charism of Blessed Scalabrini have followed the Christian tradition, matured over the centuries, dedicating themselves to the care and service to the new generations, through schools, projects of human, social and cultural formation, hospitals, centers for the hospitality and promotion of migrants and refugees, in various apostolic and missionary activities and in pastoral and cultural activities of various kinds. This is why the extraordinary figure of the Venerable Father Joseph Marchetti continues even today to solicit us to pay a special attention to migrant children.

We can say that the heroic life of Fr. Marchetti continues to encourage new vocations for the service to the smallest and most vulnerable. His missionary zeal can inspire the creation of effective models to ensure that migrant children are always welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated into the contexts in which they live.



It was said that everything flourished in the hands of that priest whose faith, hope and charity, unshakable virtues, led him to such an intense missionary religious life, which resulted in abundant fruits and extraordinary achievements in Brazil, in the short period of 22 months of apostolic-missionary action. God's love in him was so great that it urged him to make a fourth vow, in addition to the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. Through these vows, he consecrated his physical and spiritual strength to God and to his neighbor. Yes, his example continues to be a spur and, at the same time, we are moved by his profound understanding of the demands of charity and of the unconditional service for and with migrants.

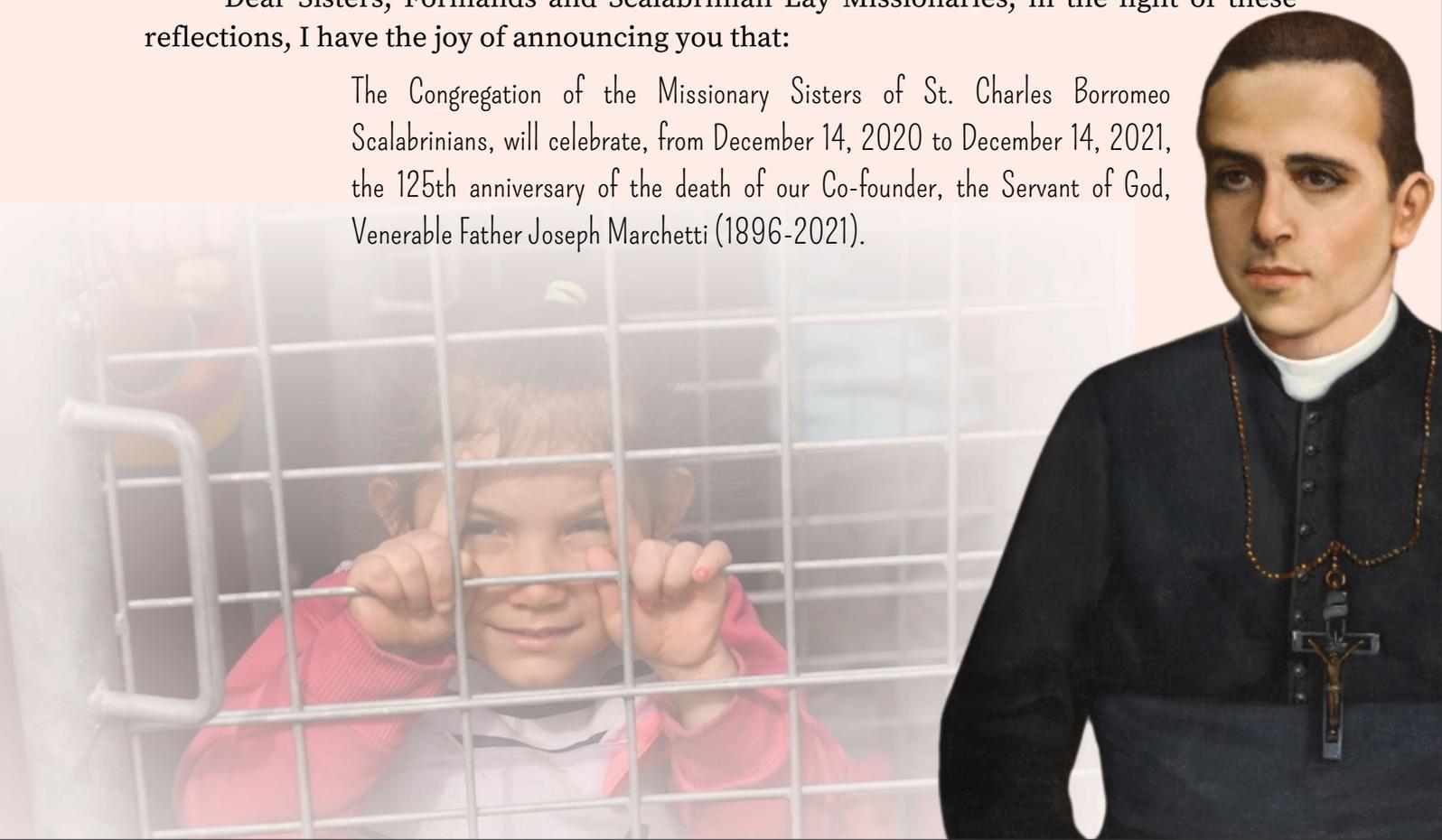
Father Giuseppe Marchetti is an important point of reference for us Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, especially for having loved God and neighbor totally, with perseverance and universality. His personality motivated and still motivates others today, with his life of virtue and, therefore, of holiness. He is a shining example of missionary spirit, of charity and fidelity to the Scalabrinian charism: he is a figure of great relevance for our times.

He was gifted with a brilliant intelligence, very determined and daring; everyone was amazed to see how, in a short time, he was able to integrate in the socio-cultural context of the great metropolis of Brazil, São Paulo, immediately understanding what kind of apostolic missionary work he had to undertake, as a response to the difficult situation in which migrants found themselves.

We can define Father Joseph Marchetti as a miracle of the grace. He was constantly nourished by fidelity to all his duties: prayer and purity of intention were means to seek only the will of God and the salvation of the neighbor, especially the poor and needy, giving himself with gratuitousness, happy to do everything out of love and with love. His life is a perfect synthesis of action and contemplation.

Dear Sisters, Formands and Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries, in the light of these reflections, I have the joy of announcing you that:

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo Scalabrinians, will celebrate, from December 14, 2020 to December 14, 2021, the 125th anniversary of the death of our Co-founder, the Servant of God, Venerable Father Joseph Marchetti (1896-2021).



This year will be a flourishing year which will allow us to deepen and to value the life and work of our beloved Co-founder, the Venerable Servant of God Father Joseph Marchetti, so that he can be even more known, loved and invoked. For this reason, each event is to be prepared and intensely lived in all the areas of the Congregation, of the Provinces, the Delegation and the communities, by means of innovative programs, activities and initiatives, both formative, commemorative and popular. Reflections, in-depth studies and personal and community prayers to Father Joseph Marchetti will also be intensified.

Therefore, in this jubilee year of the Congregation and in this 125th anniversary of the death of our Co-founder, we look at Father Joseph Marchetti as an example for us and for the youth. We invoke him, as an excellent vocation promoter, committed and effective, who knew how to live his consecration in docility and openness to the Holy Spirit. For this reason he teaches us that encountering the Gospel is discovering one's own vocation, which is realized through a divine mediation and is inserted in the history and in the availability to serve in the Kingdom of God. May he intercede with God for new vocations for the Church and for our Congregation, at the service of migrants and refugees.

On this day, when we commemorate his last and definitive journey to the heavenly homeland, we ask for the intercession and company of the Venerable Servant of God, Father Joseph Marchetti. We trust in the protection of our Co-founder, "martyr of charity", so that in this jubilee year we can continue to carry out with passion the mission entrusted to us, urged by charity which is the heart of the Gospel. In this way "we will walk humbly with our God" (Mi 6:8), as missionaries together with migrants and refugees.

Deo Gratias!

Sr. Neusa de Fátima Mariano, mscs
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Superior general, council and general secretary

