



Rome, November 4, 2020

Prot. n. 163/2020

Circular n. 02/2020

Subject: Feast of St. Charles Borromeo, Patron of the Congregation
Vocation Promotion Day in our Congregation

Dear Sisters and Formands,

*"I admit that we are all weak, but if we want help,
The Lord God has given us the means to find it easily"*
(St. Charles Borromeo)

Today, November 4, we remember, as every year, the figure of our Patron, Saint Charles Borromeo, who was totally dedicated to Christ and His Church. In this Jubilee Year, in which we celebrate the 125th Anniversary of Foudation (1895-2020) - a gift of grace for the whole Congregation, a sign of the tenderness and loving presence of God in our history, an expression of God's election and fidelity -, we, Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters, welcome the new call to rediscover the reasons why our Founder, Blessed John Baptist Scalabrini entrusted us to the special protection of St. Charles.

He has been the promoter of a real reform, that is, of a renewal which urged to move forward, because it taught how to live in a new way the everlasting values, in a century marked by heresies, wars and epidemics. The Church owes to St. Charles the radical renewal which was realized after the Council of Trent. In fact, he succeeded in reforming and convincing others because he was a man totally centered in Christ.

The contemplation of his life opens to each of us new "vocational" horizons, which lead to a greater apostolic effectiveness. In fact, in one of his sermons he affirms: "I admit that we are all weak, but if we want help, the Lord God has given us the means to find it easily. Without them, however, it will not be possible to be faithful to the commitment of our vocation" [1]. For Saint Charles to be faithful to the commitment of one's vocation means: "do not give yourself to others to the point where nothing remains of yourself". In his life as a Pastor, who knew how to take care of his flock till the end, like Jesus, he offers us a precise teaching: "do not forget yourselves".

In Saint Charles vocation and holiness grew together. Fixing his gaze on Jesus, St. Charles let himself be touched by the Lord who calls his friends to "stay with him and be sent", thus feeling the need for a radical imitation: "First preach by the way you live and with your holiness. Always give a good example and try to be the first in everything". It is St. Charles again who reminds us: "You must realise that nothing is more necessary to consecrated persons than meditation. We must meditate before, during and after everything we do". Therefore, it becomes essential for each of us to remember the importance of meditating on all the works of the Lord and considering God's mighty deeds (cf. Ps 77:12), because in the meditation of God's Word, God makes all things new in us.

[1] C. Borromeo, Sermon by Saint Charles Borromeo, Bishop, in last Synodus Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis, Milan 1599, 1177-1178.

In the life of St. Charles, holiness was not a privilege for a few, but a right for everyone. Faced with some choices in his life, faced with the pastoral needs of the Church of his time, he seriously considered his entire existence. The conversion of his heart, conformed to the love of Jesus, coincided with the discovery of his priestly vocation. Today St. Charles invites each one of us to take on this same spiritual attitude; to thank the Lord for the gift of the vocation received and for the countless attentions God has for us; for the patience with which He has instructed us and for the many graces with which He has protected us over the years.

From the vocational response of our special Patron we learn that the vocational life must be perceived, understood, welcomed, nourished and given. According to him, the constant attention to the life of the other and the encouragement in the vocational growth can inspire and generate vocations for the reform of the whole Church. And we, women consecrated for the mission, look in a special way to our Patron Saint and ask in this jubilee year to be able to undertake a journey of renewal of our consecrated life as MSCSs, a renewal which makes us “experience moments of difficulty, but also moments of growth and remarkable vitality” [2]. In fact, our renewal in our spiritual journey generates a greater vitality in the Scalabrinian charism, deepens our relationships in community and responds to the challenges and appeals of our time in the joyful and generous service to migrants and refugees.

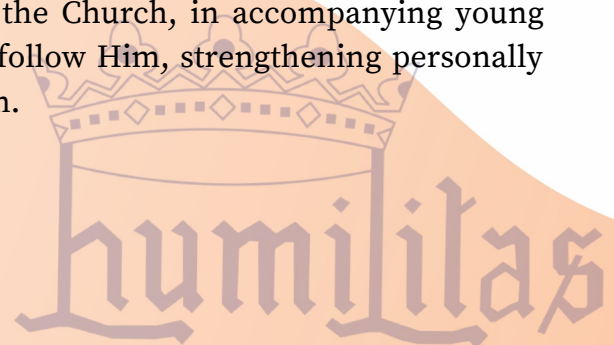
Dearest Sisters, in response to the decisions issued by the XIV General Chapter which has established Vocation Promotion as a priority in this six-year period 2019-2025[3], in communion with the General Councilors, I establish that on November 4 of each year, we celebrate the Vocation Promotion Day in our Congregation. Therefore, I invite you to intensely celebrate this day in our communities with meetings of study, reflection, prayer and celebrations for vocations, promoting activities and initiatives on this theme, and so, in creativity and innovation, we seek above all the involvement and the participation of youth, lay people and collaborators. Let us resume, with renewed ardor, the community Eucharistic Adoration for vocations on the first Thursday of the month.

Let us live with intensity this time of grace of the 125th Anniversary Jubilee, recognizing God’s saving presence in our pilgrimage as Congregation, and at the same time, let us ask for the protection of St. Charles Borromeo on each Sister and Formand, so that following his example we can revive the gift of the call (2Tim 1:6) and the vocational richness of the Scalabrinian charism. Let us try to incarnate in our life “the emblem Humilitas of our Patron Saint Charles Borromeo which suggests a lifestyle and a way of acting”[4] which encourages us to propose strong experiences of Christian life and commitment in solidarity with migrants and refugees and in the spirit of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. Let us testify the joy of following Christ as an effective invitation to “come and see” so that we may all feel co-responsible in awakening vocations at the service of the Church, in accompanying young people to the encounter with Jesus who calls them to follow Him, strengthening personally and in community, the culture of the ongoing formation.

[2] Cfr. Vita Consecrata No. 2

[3] XIV General Chapter, Final Document, p. 5

[4] NC 9



We ask the Lord, through the intercession of our Patron St. Charles Borromeo, to grant the Church and our Congregation new vocations for the mission with migrants, while we welcome with joy and gratitude the new seeds of hope and newness that international faces bring to our Congregation. Moved by the action of the Spirit and by the example of our Founder, Blessed John Baptist Scalabrini and our co-founders Blessed Assunta Marchetti and Venerable Fr. Giuseppe Marchetti, we can engage with renewed passion in Vocation Promotion as the highest priority of this six years term, in creative fidelity to our daily vocational response, which makes us dwell with our hearts in migrations, attentive to the challenges of our time and walking humbly with our God together with migrants and refugees.

Grateful for God's fidelity, we wish you a beautiful and solemn celebration of our Patron St. Charles in communion with all the Sisters and the young women in formation whom God has entrusted to us.

Saint Charles Borromeo, pray for us!

Sr. Neusa de Fatima Mariano, mscs
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Superior General

