



To Reverend  
**Sr. M.C. Karuna Kuruvanthanam**  
Superior General  
of the Clarist Franciscan Missionaries  
of the Blessed Sacrament

On the occasion of the General Chapter XVII, which by glad coincidence is being celebrated during the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of your religious Family, I am particularly glad to send you and your Sisters my cordial greetings, accompanied by my paternal prayers.

Chapter Assembly is a time of grace. It is a time to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, to allow ourselves to be led meekly along the path He shows, in the certainty that only in this way will our choices contribute effectively for the good of all.

As spiritual daughters of St. Clare, I urge you to rediscover the beauty of "being with Him" as women of prayer, who through contemplation, meditation and ardent adoration of the Eucharistic Mystery, know how to embody a humble and hidden attitude and who are courageous to leave everything behind joyfully in order to follow the Master on the paths of the world, to be sentinels of God's merciful love.

Like St. Francis of Assisi, you have to nurture the audacity of prayer, willing to live and proclaim the Gospel in the itinerant way, with a passion for evangelization and dedicated to gratuitous service to the most needy, especially those at the peripheries of society, to the many who are excessively poor and the abandoned of our times. Therefore, by imitating Christ, you too put on the clothes of the One who "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, so that by His poverty we might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9).

*May the Lord grant you His peace!* May this prayer of blessing handed down by the Seraphic Father to his brothers, be a source of consolation for you in the apostolate of each day

where the Church invites you to cooperate in the proclamation of the Gospel; moreover, may you be an "instrument of peace", that is Christ, born of His "greatest" love on the Cross. As far as I recall, Franciscan peace "is not something saccharine... it is found by those who 'take up' their 'yoke', namely, Christ's commandment: *Love one another as I have loved you* (cf. Jn 13:34; 15:12). This yoke cannot be borne with arrogance, presumption or pride, but only with meekness and humility of heart" (cf. *Homily*, 4 October 2013).

This makes me think, therefore, of your mission as educators and consecrated women who have chosen to give their lives to Christ; However, may the perfect joy be deeply rooted in you, as you become the Father's smile for all those whom you meet on the way, so that they may see in you the loving face of the "Most High, all-powerful, good Lord" (*Canticle of Creatures* 1).

I wish that sustained by the inexhaustible power flowing from the Most Blessed Eucharist - source, centre and summit of Christian life, you may "*go forth, enkindle and carry the love of the Eucharistic Lord*" in faithfulness to the charism that inspired Mother Seraphina.

With these sentiments, I bestow upon you and your Sisters my Blessing. May the Virgin Mother, along with Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi, protect you. And, I ask you to please pray for me.

Fraternally,

*Franciscus*

Rome, from St. John Lateran, 3 April 2023