



PILGRIMS OF HOPE IN COMMUNION
37th General Chapter 2022

Coordinator of Lay Associates and Associations

L.J.C. et M.I.

Rome (Italy), 17th February 2024

Dear laity, consecrated Oblates and all members of the charismatic family,

Joyfully accepting the invitation extended to me by the Superior General, I am here to write a few lines to share with all of you the spirit of celebration on the anniversary of the approval of the Constitutions and Rules. The Superior General, since he took office, has always addressed the entire charismatic family, to each person who commits to living, in their own state of life, the charism given to the Church by Saint Eugene de Mazenod. This year in particular, the Superior General dedicated his letter of February 17 to the theme of Lay Associates. I am profoundly grateful for this attention that has been given to us, starting with the Second World Congress of the Laity and the last General Chapter.

My very appointment as coordinator of the laity represents a tangible sign of this attention. I carry out this service relying on the help of the Holy Spirit and trusting in the richness of the experiences lived by lay persons all over the world, as attested during the congress. It gave us the opportunity to get to know each other and to see how, in all parts of the world, we live our baptismal vocation in different ways at times, but always with the same Oblate spirit. We are truly part of a family as big as the world!

I asked to be able to carry out my service together with other lay persons, representatives of the regions, and three oblates. They are the same persons who participated in the preparation of the congress and were present at the General Chapter. I asked this, not only to be able to count on precious collaboration throughout the continents, but to be able to work "in a synodal style community", laity and consecrated together. Throughout my life as a lay Oblate, I have had the grace of living this community and synodal spirit, and I have had the opportunity to appreciate its importance and the fruits it brings. Even the hours that I spend for my service at the General House are in this style. Thanks to the hospitality of the community that lives there, working, talking, praying and sharing dinner together are so many small, simple gestures that "make a family".

In light of this, as we approach two imminent and important stages of the journey, the celebration of the Jubilee in 2025 and the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the papal approval of the Constitutions and Rules in 2026, I share this invitation to you to reflect and share with the others some food for thought, also born in the wake of the three steps launched by the Superior General in his letter, "To recognize by giving thanks, learn, create common spaces and moments":

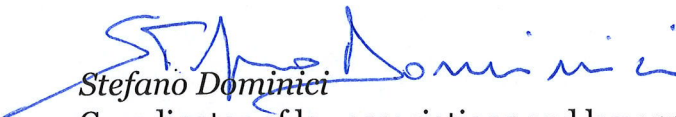
- How do I describe the Spirit that attracted me to the charism of the Oblates? What attracted me to the charism? How can I keep this fire burning?
- As a community, what is our current ministry serving the poor? How can we be increasingly in unity and communion with other laity and with the OMIs?
- What is the next step to take in our pilgrimage together as laity and consecrated Oblates?

Finally, to give substance to our desire to walk and progress together, some practical suggestions:

- I invite the laity and the Oblates to refer to the representatives of the regions (the list is at the bottom of the page) to maintain and strengthen the network of relationships that was started with the 2nd Congress of the Laity;
- I invite us to make known in advance (always through the regional representatives) the significant moments of life as lay persons: any meetings or gatherings at the unit or regional level;
- I invite us to communicate to the regional representatives the names of the lay groups present in the units and, if possible, a point of contact.

Let us move forward like this, together with the priests, Brothers, youth and consecrated women of our charismatic family, Pilgrims of Hope in Communion.

May the Lord bless us all,


 Stefano Dominici
 Coordinator of lay associations and lay associates

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