

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE FOR JUBILEE LENTEN PROGRAM



My dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends in the Passionist Family,

I send you fraternal greetings as we begin the journey of Lent – the goal of which is our on-going and deeper response to the call of Jesus to CONVERSION: *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel” (Mk. 1:15).*

The call to ‘repent’ is a spiritual call to newness and renewal of mind and heart, shaped by the values of the Gospel. This time is an opportunity for us to deepen our call to discipleship, as the *Godspell* musical song says: *“To see thee more clearly; love thee more dearly; follow thee more nearly, day by day.”*

Because of our human frailty, we know that conversion and renewal of mind and heart is a daily constant need... and it is a grace from our patient and loving God freely available for anyone who genuinely seeks this “pearl of great price”. However, it does not come easily, without some effort on our part. The call to conversion and repentance is always in the context of our **relationship** with God: *invitation* and *response* – a two-way engagement.

As Passionist disciples, we have been *in the process* of a specific journey: the commemoration of the third centenary of the foundation of the Passionist Congregation. Recognizing this as a spiritual event, we saw the necessity to commemorate this occasion as a Jubilee Year: a ‘kairos’ moment and graced opportunity for renewal. The inspired and chosen theme resounding for us in this Year is: **Renewing our Mission – Gratitude, Prophecy, Hope**. However, we are also continually reminded that *the renewal of our mission presupposes the renewal of ourselves*. There can be no renewal of the mission without the renewal and transformation of the missionaries. It is presumed that the mission is Christ’s; and we are missionaries in Christ’s name. So, *“repent and believe in the gospel”*.



While there has been much preparation and many activities to mark the anniversary of the Congregation's foundation which opened on 22 November 2020, the General Council felt the need to encourage and keep alive the momentum of the Jubilee Year which concludes on 1 January 2022. As such, we believe that the liturgical season of Lent, with its goal of 'conversion', is an appropriate time to propose some animation for our Jubilee with its related goal of 'renewal', in light of the charismatic dream of our founder, St. Paul of the Cross.

Two members of the Council, Frs. Rafael Vivanco and Juan Ignacio Villar, were tasked with preparing a series of reflections for the weeks of Lent and Holy Week. These reflections follow the Gospel reading for each Sunday, relating it with a theme that connects with the spiritual experience of St. Paul of the Cross as recorded in his Spiritual Diary during his 40-days retreat in Castellazzo, and suggestions assisting us to reflect in light of our present times.

I am pleased to present this Lenten resource to the Passionist Family, and while I encourage you to engage personally with the rich material contained in this series, I strongly urge the dynamic of communal engagement as Passionist communities, and groups of religious and laity, by allowing time each week to make use of this spiritual resource as a Lenten and Jubilee hope for renewal and conversion.

With my best wishes for a fruitful Lent and a life-renewing Easter joy,



Fr. Joachim Rego, C.P.
Superior General

Solemn Commemoration of the Passion
12 February 2021
Retreat of SS. Giovanni e Paolo
Rome

