

Rome, 19 May 2013

CHRONICLES FROM PENTECOST SUNDAY 2013

MEMOIRS MARKING THE ROAD OF COMMUNION OF SISTER CONGREGATIONS, WILLED BY SAINT VINCENT PALLOTTI.

Congregation of the Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate and Missionary Sisters
of the Catholic Apostolate

The 175th Anniversary of our foundation has given us a wonderful Feast of Pentecost, marking our hearts with the indelible “ointment” of Love. A “downpour of graces” descended upon all, an explosion of irrepressible joy, a profound commotion, while contemplating once again, the glory of God shining on our faces, with the certainty that He can carry out amazing works, despite the impediments set by human limitation in the course of history.

It was great to meet in the late afternoon, in the Church of the SS. Salvatore in Onda as the Union of the Catholic Apostolate, celebrating together: Priests, Brothers, Sisters and Lay members, the thanksgiving for the life of our Congregations.

Since a couple of days we **all** were **busy** with preparing this event, especially the two Superiors General: Sister Serena Cambiaghi and Sister Izabela Świerad, drawing up the Message to be handed over to our sisters, who are spread all over the world.

The collaboration has brought its fruit: a beautiful choir with songs inspired by the Liturgy, the **entrance procession** with symbols expressing the beauty and the richness of a Charism and of a Spirituality always alive and current, and which we wish to share:

The icon of Pentecost manifesting our desire to remain always in the Cenacle, to obtain the strength of the Spirit and bring the Good News to all.

The lamp and the flowers along with the commitment of striving to revive and rekindle the flame of charity and the spiritual energy in us and in every expression of Christian life, at the places where we live and work.

The Fundamental Rule, with the essential elements for the transformation of our lives in Christ and **the key** to relive the moment in which Saint Vincent 175 years ago opened the door of the Pia Casa. An additional occasion to ask the Holy Spirit for making us open to his inspirations, his powerful and gentle action, to the signs of the time, to the cry of the suffering, to the future, to the faithfulness to God.

To a birthday one always brings a gift; it was moving to witness the offering of the gift of the **written commitment** by every sister, expressing the affection towards our family, the faithfulness, the trust and certainty that the Lord will show us the road to walk today and in all our tomorrows.

Rector General of the SAC, very Rev. Fr. Jacob Nampudakam, who presided over the celebration, has offered us a special homily – which we will treasure with gratitude – exhorting us with the wish that this day may become an historical memoir of unity, communion and new life for the future. Basing on the passage of Deuteronomy (Dt 30: 19-20), he put us before a crossroad of life or death, reminding us that the two Congregations, founded by our Holy Founder, have lived for so many years, because sisters have made choices of life for the future, building thus our today. With the words of the Message of the

two Superiors General: “We wish to express our gratitude, offering as a gift our personal and community witness, as a valid means for evangelization and to reveal to the world the person of Jesus Christ and the beauty of a life lived in communion with God”, Father Jacob brought to mind the simple, but incisive witness of Sisters, now living in God, who have left a valid example, which we can follow.

He reminded us of the importance of the Cenacle to live in God, and also the missionarity of the Church, which, as Pope Francis exhorts, has to reach out to the existential peripheries. He emphasized that our Congregations were born from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to go to the most vulnerable persons of that time... Pallotti looked for a group of holy women, ready to acquire “the fullness and the Spirit of Jesus Christ” (cf. OO. CC. IV, pp. 24-26). He concluded wishing us to acquire the courage and the strength to answer to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, to go everywhere to proclaim the Good News, declaring clearly our choice of life.

Very moving was the moment of the **renewal of our consecration**.

The two Superiors General, accompanied by their respective Vicars, holding a light in their hands, introduced a dialogue with the Assembly, with the purpose to continue in the following of Jesus, the Apostle of the Father, according to the Evangelical Counsels, in the Mission of the Church, in our religious Family and in the Union, entrusting the gift of faithfulness and of belonging to the care of the Queen of Apostles. This ended with the Amen, pronounced in gratitude and in joyful faithfulness.

We will never be able to forget the concluding moment of the celebration, instantly after the solemn benediction of the Celebrant: “Our beloved Founder, today, here, in this church, where we treasure and venerate his body, wanted to gather us all together his daughters in an embrace, in a strong tie of unity. At this holy place, the spiritual center of the Union, Saint Vincent assures us once more of his closeness, he transmits us his certainty and entrusts to us the same mission as 175 years ago. Our Superiors General, by a symbolic gesture wish to express our honest adhesion to the dream of our Founder to see us all united for the sake of giving glory to God and to witness his Infinite Love and His infinite Mercy to all. Let us all be clasped in this embrace to continue to walk together, with humility and trust, towards the future of God”.

With these words and with two ribbons, white and red, which reported the sentences of our Founder: “the Congregation will be blessed by God” and “I love you in God*, I embrace you in God...”... held up by Sr. Izabela and Sr. Serena, and which two fellow sisters tied up through the whole church, clasping the whole Assembly in an embrace of unity and of communion, we rejoiced with commotion and applauded warmly. The Mothers General exchanged the ribbons: they will treasure them as a memento of this event and as commitment for the future; on the altar they signed together the message for all Fellow Sisters.

The two General Councils, Rector General SAC Father Jacob Nampudakam, some Sisters of the Council of the Province “Regina Apostolorum”, the President of the Italian CCN, Signor Corrado Montaldo, Mons. Tadeusz Wojda SAC from the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples and the Sisters of the Procura concluded the evening with a dinner in the Generalate of the Pallottine Missionary Sisters.

In a wonderful room, the festive table lavishly laid, with candles, flowers, red tulle and beads created a familiar joyful atmosphere, in which we enjoyed apart from delicious food and drinks also a most beautiful presentation of vintage photos, from some moments of our

common history with diverse past meetings – formal or informal – in these years among the two Congregations.

Our history has not been easy, but we are here and we want to open ourselves - as Pope Francis said in the homily during the celebration of the Solemnity of Pentecost - to the novelty, to harmony and to mission.

The Lord made use of events, apparently negative ones, to build a history rich with surprises, fruit of His great merciful love and we are certain that he will continue to amaze us. It is not we who are to create unity, it is the Spirit of the Lord who bestows it on us, and we only need to open the doors of the heart to allow him to work: it is He who creates harmony without uniformity and homogeneity.

May this anniversary help us to realize the dream of St. Vincent Pallotti, in cooperation with the members of the Union, according to their own identity and vocation, united through the bond of mutual charity and through apostolic zeal, to fulfil the mission of Christ; for the infinite glory of God, the salvation of souls and the destruction of sin, in the diverse apostolates, supported by Grace and by our Patron, Mary Queen of the Apostles.

**I see you in God, I treat you in God, I love you in God and in God I find myself always united in all your works, to be all together gathered in 'God, in the Kingdom of Heaven, to praise eternally the divine mercies. The Congregation is blessed by God and will develop.
S.V. Pallotti*

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