

# LA CARTA

February 2021



## Dear Brothers,

As I write this message, our General Diet is in progress. After we had to endure its postponement due to Covid-19, I am happy to say that because of the good will of God and sacrifice of our confreres, everything is progressing nicely. The Diet is quite important, and our Constitutions note that "The General Diet, which at present takes the place of the Provincial Chapter, will be convoked by the Superior General three years after the General Chapter. The Superior General will preside for it or, if this is not possible, the Vicar General. It has the same organization and the same duties as the General Chapter, except for those matters explicitly reserved for the General Chapter" (Constitutions 191).

During this first week, the state of our religious family was presented by Our delegates and we truly feel the sense of family. Though we come from different parts of the world, we are seeing ourselves as one Family. This does not mean that we lack disagreements, but it does imply that our love of the Order must be at the foundation of everything we do. In fact, our Constitutions allude to the fact that "the highest expression of the life and of the communion of the entire Order" is expressed in such worldwide meetings.

At the beginning of our General Diet, we were truly blessed by the presence of His Eminence, Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, The Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes and Societies of Apostolic life. During his homily at our opening Mass, the good cardinal emphasized that we are disciples, who take part in a beautiful charism that has been shared with us. Our charism is not "something we do" but rather a gift that has been given to us by God. In this light, our holy Founders zeal for the charism has been shared with all of us. We are called to allow the charism to work in us in a living and vibrant manner. Our living of the charism should be as a beacon of light shining before others. Of course, what ties everything together is humility. Humility leads us to a sense of simplicity and to the reality that all we do should be conformed to Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life. He warns us that the Charism is not something to be copied but to be lived in our present time since we are the children

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of this present moment. May our lives be so inflamed to witness to the gifts of the spirit in our present time so that the next generation may stand on the foundation of the goodness of our religious life.

Humility and love of the Order should also influence us in our daily way of life. We should not be closed in on ourselves but rather open to the movement of the spirit. In fact, Pope Francis encouraged us "remain barricaded in the sacristy and cultivate small closed groups where we can snuggle up and be comfortable." "There is a world waiting for the Gospel and the Lord desires His shepherds to be conformed to Him, carrying in their hearts and on their shoulders the expectations and burdens of the flock. Open, compassionate, merciful hearts." As religious, we must develop such an attitude. This implies that we must be open and ready to go out into the world. We remember the words, do not be afraid. Perhaps we can strive evermore to be open and to be that beacon of light which enriched Our life as religious, our ministerial work and the life of our dear people.

As many of you already know, while I am writing this letter late at night of February 11, 2022 on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, our confrere Father Giuseppe Luccarelli, CRM has entered into his heavenly reward. He was certainly a good religious and a good priest. His faith, his love for our religious family and his spirit of joy were hallmarks of who he was. He spent his life in various houses of the Italian delegation faithfully lived his vocation to the fullest. May his life continue to inspire us all. I remind you to celebrate Masses for our dear brother.....Requiescat in pace. We suspended our Dieta Chapter until after his interment.

At our Dieta Chapter and for the first time we displayed the image of our founders. Attached to this letter are the translated prayers for the people in thanksgiving for the Three Founders. The Icon of the image of the founders is also being reproduced in three sizes to be sold in your respective places to help the work of the Order. Another set of prayers is a prayer to be used by our religious in their respective communities. Let us continue to seek the Lord and the intercession of our founders as we continue to live our religious life faithfully. All the Best and may our Holy Founders always intercede for us.

**Fr. Ted Kalaw, CRM**