

# LA CARTA

DECEMBER 2023



Dear Brothers in Christ,

Peace of Christ!

I wish to greet all of you a holy season of Advent! As we begin this preparation for the coming of the Lord on Christmas day, let us remember our world torn apart because of war and hatred. Let us approach and implore the Emmanuel with petitions to bring quickly bestow peace in the world, peace in our society, and in our communities and in our hearts. May there be no hatred and jealousy in our hearts. Let us together seek the Christ and the work he asks of us.

In the light of our shared vocation and the illuminating words of His Holiness Pope Francis, I invite you for a moment of reflection on our call as Adorno Fathers and Brothers. His recent homily challenges us to re-examine the heart of our ministry, beckoning us to return to the fundamental ‘principle and foundation’ of our existence and our work: which is love.

Adoration and service, as articulated by Pope Francis, are not merely actions but states of “being that call for our entire self.” To adore is to love God wholly, acknowledging His sovereign lordship over our lives. This act of adoration, brothers, is an act of humility, a recognition that we are but servants in the vineyard of the Lord, called to tend to His people with the same love that Christ has shown us.

The Pope’s homily resonates profoundly with our charism. It invites us to reject any form of idolatry, including the subtle ones that may arise from within our ranks, such as pride in our spirituality or pastoral achievements. Instead, we are called to the purity of worship — a worship that is free from self and centered on God.





In service, we find our love for God reflected in our love for neighbor. To serve is to recognize Christ in the poor, the marginalized, and the suffering. It is to wash the feet of humanity, much like our Lord who washed the feet of His disciples. This is the ‘perennial reform’ we are called to — a return to the basics of love and service that underpin our very mission. It is very unfortunate that the dicastery removed this act in our solemn profession, nonetheless this reminds us of who we are. We must be like a vigilant servant always ready to serve when the Master comes, even in the disguise of the poor or other people we may serve as he calls us.

As Adorno Fathers, we are no strangers to the challenges of servitude and the humility it requires. The words of Pope Francis echo the spirituality we strive to live by — a spirituality that sees God as the ultimate end and His people as the primary recipients of our service. We are reminded that our ministry is not about us but about God working through us. It is about bringing the leaven of the Gospel to a world so desperately in need of its transformative power. This calls even more that our apostolate is not centered around us, it is not priest centered, nor a reflection of us on the water of washing, but the reflection of the face of God in however we serve. Never allow, any space, not even a split second, that whatever we may attempt to do, whether it be big or small or insignificant is about us. Self-gratification must never enter our hearts. If we focus on ourselves, ultimately we will be miserable and often times looking for attention and appreciation. Do everything for the love of God and our Order. Anything aside this is not important. God always accomplishes his will with or without us. Here, truly we adore no one else but Jesus who came in the humble manger as our only savior and lord, an indispensable God who is faithful and who loves.

Let us, therefore, my dear brothers, recommit ourselves to this noble calling. May our lives be a continuous act of adoration. May our hands always be extended in service. And may our hearts remain humble, remembering that we are but instruments in the divine symphony of God’s salvific work.

In closing, I implore you all to find moments of silent adoration in your daily lives, and in that silence, to listen for the voice of the One we serve. Through every act of kindness, with every gesture of love and fraternity, let us strive to be the face of Christ to all whom we encounter.

Please remember me in your prayers as I begin the canonical visitations of our houses. May my health never become an obstacle to what the Lord wishes to accomplish in us and may the communities open their hearts to see much conversion in our lives and to choose to live more simply like our lord Jesus Christ!

Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam (For the Greater Glory of God),

*Teodoro Kalaw, CRM*

