

Prot.S.058.2020

**TO THE ORDER OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS
THE GRACE AND PEACE OF GOD, OUR FATHER**

"Whoever drinks from the water that I will give him, he will never be thirsty again. Within him that water will become a spring from which eternal life will sprout" (Jn 4:14)

Dear Brothers:

I am writing this letter to you in the midst of the crisis we are experiencing because of the pandemic affecting our world. And I do so on this third Sunday of Lent, in which the Word of God reaches our hearts, hand in hand with Jesus' dialogue with the Samaritan woman, to remind us where is the source of Life, of the full Life.

In these moments of difficulty and impossibility to carry out our Piarist mission (closed schools, limitation of movements, closed churches and without the possibility of celebrating together and in person our faith, the need to be at home to avoid risks of our own and others) it is more important than ever that we turn our gaze to the one who is able to respond to all our concerns, and that we listen again, addressed to each of us, the words of the Lord: *Let all who are weary and overwhelmed come unto Me, and I will relieve them" (Mt 11:28).*

Perhaps in these times of uncertainty it is more necessary than ever for us to tell each other what we are and are called to be: *ministers of the hope of the future Kingdom and of fraternal union between men*¹. Our last General Chapter could not foresee what we are experiencing, but it did offer us a reflection on this text of our Constitutions. It is good that we adapt it to our current reality and ponder it: *"Being ministers of hope in these times of crisis brings us closer to the hearts of many people distressed by meaninglessness in their lives or hit by the crisis. We can be ministers of hope because, above all, we are followers of Christ, our hope (1Tim 1:1). Trusting in Him, we face the trials to which we are subjected today. We hear his word that invites us not to torment us, not to run away, to stand firm. An awoken and praying Piarist life will feed the hope we need to live our consecrated life with joy and to continue this beautiful mission of being "ministers of hope", especially in those contexts in which many people - mainly everything, young people - suffer for a lack of a future."*²

I invite you all to think about how we can be *ministers of hope* at this time we are living. There's a lot we can do.

¹ Constitutions of the Pious Schools, N ° 25).

² 47th General Chapter of the Pious Schools, "Disciples and Witnesses", point II.7.22. COLLECTION CUADERNOS, N ° 53.

First, prayer, personal and communitarian, asking the Lord for the people who suffer and for the end of this situation. I receive initiatives from many places of the Order in which there are various proposals of prayer for all that we are living, and I am very happy for all this: chains of prayer in our houses of formation, special celebrations, moments of Eucharistic worship, etc. The testimony of faith and trust in God helps us and helps those who are in contact with us.

Let us offer messages of closeness and encouragement to those who live in difficulty in this situation. I know a lot of old people who are worried, and I know that their caregivers are worried too. Although they cannot receive visits, there are many ways to bring the closeness and affection of the brothers.

And where educational and pastoral activity is still possible, it is important to help everyone, especially students, learn how to conduct themselves and value respect for others, personal responsibility and, above all, the strength of faith.

Let us transmit with our lives and our attitudes what is most needed at this moment: trust in God, joy, responsibility and commitment for a more just and human world.

I urge each and every one to fully implement the measures laid down by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and to proceed with extreme prudence in all areas of our lives. All of this will benefit everyone.

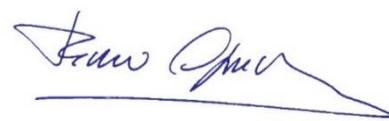
As you all know, we have had to suspend some important activities that were organized by the General Congregation (General Canonical Visit, Order Meetings, etc.), and the same has to be done in each of the Provinces. Let us accept with peace and humility these decisions that are not to our liking, but are inevitable. Let us hope that in a few weeks we can resume our daily lives, and pray for it.

We entrust our students, their families, our collaborators and the Pious Schools to the protection of Mary.

Receive a brotherly hug.



Fr. Francesc Mulet. Sch. P.
General Secretary



Fr. Pedro Aguado Sch. P.
Father General

Veracruz, Mexico, March 15, 2020.