



# Inspired

*Letter to our  
brethren*

JULY 2025

Dear brothers,

**W**ith deep respect and a grateful heart, I address you for the first time as General Father of our beloved Order. I do so from Bamè, in Benin (close to the presence of the Province of the Piarist Fathers of West Africa), where we are living **the third edition of the programme “Pious Schools Going Forth”**. The choice of location is not by chance. From here, I want to begin this epistolary connection with the whole Order, because here the Gospel — Good News for many — beats strongly, and the Piarist charism is expanding. Here, that missionary vocation takes shape, urging us to open new paths and generate mission for education, faith and justice.

First of all, I would like to express in this *Salutatio*, addressed to the large Piarist community, my gratitude to Fr Pedro for his generous dedication, courageous daring and patient perseverance, and his deep love for the Pious Schools. His leadership has carved out a fertile path along which we can now move forward with confidence.

I begin this new mission with simplicity and a spirit of service, aware of the context of transition, and also deeply confident in the strength of the charism we share. I know I do not walk alone. Communion with all of you, and with the Lord who has called us, will be my daily support.

I hope this letter (and those to follow each month) **may carry out the humble yet precious mission that the correspondence of our Holy Father Joseph Calasanz once fulfilled**, and that Pedro continued with fidelity: to be a channel of communion, an invitation to shared reflection, an open window to what the Spirit is stirring among us, and, above all, a source of inspiration.

Inspiration is a decisive attitude in religious life, in the educational ministry, and in our evangelising presence. In a world increasingly suffocated by administrative demands, disoriented by the logic of performance, and threatening to drain the soul of our missions, we need spaces where our gaze may shine again. **We need to recover wonder, fervour, and foundational passion.** We are in need of inspiration, because without it, everything fades away.

### To inspire is to be born

To inspire is not a trivial word. It comes from the Latin *inspirare* —to breathe into, to blow within. It is the breath of life. The very first thing we do when we are born is to breathe in. And it is inspiration that sustains life: without air, without breath, without spirit, nothing flourishes. In Hebrew, the word *ruaj* means at once wind, breath, and spirit. Inspiration is, in short, **the presence of God's Spirit within us** —a presence that runs through the whole history of salvation, from Genesis to Pentecost. As Karl Rahner reminds us: *the Christian of the future will be a mystic, or will not be at all.*<sup>1</sup> And mysticism begins with an inspiration, when we allow the Other to breathe within us.

### Inspired Piarists

That is why we want **our Order to be guided and animated precisely by keys of life and inspiration** (authenticity–identity, synodality, sustainability, and going forth). Because we do not want to live by inertia, or serve out of habit. **We want to live inspired, and to be capable of inspiring others.** Inspired by the Gospel, by Calasanz, by the children we accompany, and by

the life of our communities. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, who did not recognise Jesus as he walked with them and explained the Scriptures, but only when he broke bread with them —and only then did they understand that their hearts were burning, set alight by the fire kindled in their encounter with Him.<sup>2</sup>

To live the keys of life and inspiration is not about slogans or catchy mottos —**it is a way of being in the world.** It is to let ourselves be pierced by them, to be transformed by them. To live inspired is to allow ourselves to be touched, moved, shaken. It is to make space within us so that the Spirit may blow.

### Inspiration is a grace and a task

But we all know **how hard it is to live inspired.** Inspiration is like a spark that sometimes erupts unannounced, and other times hides for days —longer than we would like. That is why we must learn to recognise it when it appears, to welcome it with gratitude, to nurture it patiently, to share it humbly, and to guard it with care. Inspiration is a gift of the Spirit, but it is also a task that involves us. **It requires discernment, perseverance and attentiveness.** Receiving it is not enough —we must take responsibility for it. Because every true inspiration calls for continuity —it seeks to be expressed in gestures, decisions, and new paths. **We are called to turn it into something concrete,** fruitful and shareable. Being faithful to the inspiration we have received is an essential part of our vocation.

*Jesus, a source of inspiration for all who met him*

At this point, I cannot help thinking of Jesus. Of his gestures, his way of looking, of touching, of stopping. Jesus was not a manager of religious affairs —in every page of the Gospel, we see **that he was a source of inspiration for all who encountered him.** And he still is. It is not about outwardly imitating him, but allowing ourselves to be reached by his way of being. To admire, to contemplate, to let his inspiration transform us. Jesus himself is our first point of reference. How

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1.- Karl Rahner, *Escritos de Teología*, 1968.

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2.- Lc 24, 32

much we can learn from the way he inspired others!

Inspiration can also come to us through **someone's discreet witness, a heartfelt conversation, or a reading that touches us in the depths of our being.** We ought to pay more attention to what inspires us. We need role models—not just to admire, but to imitate; people who challenge us and draw us toward virtue.

One concrete way of growing in inspiration is to share what enlightens us. (Allow me a small personal confidence: this kind of sharing is one of the blessings of the San Pantaleo community.) How wonderful it is to recommend books to one another, to share passages, to open questions among ourselves: What is inspiring you these days? What Gospel passage is accompanying you lately? Which letter of Calasanz truly moves you? One of those that inspires me most is number 4342.<sup>3</sup> I invite you to look it up—a bit of “Calasanzian clickbait” never hurts to bring us closer to the *Opera Omnia*.

Often, the word *inspiration* evokes the image of towering figures who changed the course of history—true beacons of light. Yet in the everyday fabric of our lives, in the quiet web of relationships, lies **a powerful truth: we are all called to be sources of inspiration.** Not necessarily through great speeches or epic deeds. Sometimes, to ignite a spark in someone's heart, all it takes is authenticity. All it takes is to be faithful to ourselves and to our convictions. To live truthfully in every word and gesture: a look full of tenderness, a patient listening—these are gestures that resonate in the soul.

## To go forth is to live

Today, through this *Piarists Going Forth* formation programme, inspiration through the keys of the Order becomes especially tangible.

Picture this: **21 young Piarists from different countries and demarcations** —Anselmo, Dániel, Edison, Esteban, Francis Gerysan, Gildas, Isaac, Jaffarson, Karuna, Louis A., Alfredo,

3.- From 17 March 1646, in the *Opera Omnia*.

Louis Y., Martín, Noël, József, Juan Pablo, Stefano, Alex, and myself—gathered for a couple of weeks in a modest retreat house in Benin.

They reflect, pray, work, dream, ask questions, and receive formation... to live their vocation not as a shelter, but as a missionary, educational, and pastoral *going forth*. This programme was born a few years ago from the desire to form religious **who can dwell in the peripheries, launch new presences with courage, and become brothers to the least.**

It is a way of understanding ourselves as Church, as Pious Schools: *Today, in Jesus's command "Go forth", lie the ever-new settings and challenges of the Church's evangelising mission. All of us are called to this new missionary going forth. Each Christian and every community will discern the path the Lord is asking them to follow, but all are invited to embrace this call: to leave behind our comfort and dare to reach all the peripheries in need of the light of the Gospel.*<sup>4</sup>

To live in a spirit of *going forth* is the sign of an Order that does not grow old, because it dares to be missionary. Because we continue to believe that the charism of **Calasanz bears fruit wherever the Gospel is most needed.** *Going forth* is not an add-on; it is the very heartbeat of the charism that enlivens the Pious Schools.

It is worth repeating: to live in *going forth* does not necessarily mean changing country or demarcation. **It means, above all, a way of being in the world and of understanding our Piarist vocation**—with inner availability, with a sense of being sent, with passion for the mission, even within our local context. Like the apostles at Pentecost—same reality, but a new outlook.

**We need to live the experience of initiating,** of founding, of shaping new responses to the challenges of the world. Faithfulness to our vocation is not expressed in merely managing what already exists, but in the courage to open up new paths. For we Piarists are not called to be mere administrators.

4.- Papa Francisco, *Evangelii Gaudium* 20.

That is precisely what I see in Fathers Augustin Moro, Soïne Gandaho (who, by the way, has prepared an excellent and attentive welcome for all the participants of this edition of Piarists Going Forth), and Alex Adandé. Together, they are shaping the Piarist presence in Benin with Calasanctian determination, since its founding in August 2022. Step by step, steadily and boldly, they are building a growing school, a long-dreamed-of boarding house, and a lively, simple parish community. They celebrate the Eucharist under a roof of palm leaves. They do not yet have a brick church, but they are already Church. The community comes before the building—that is what sustains everything else. What is essential is already present among them; what is visible will come in due time.

To preserve is to die. To maintain is to grow old. To go forth is to live. Let us go, let us live... and let us bring life!

**Good Father,**

*Inspire us with your Spirit, that we may live with hearts ablaze.*

*Lead us out of ourselves, to meet the children, the young, and the peripheries who await us.*

*May Saint Joseph Calasanz, teacher and servant of the little ones, intercede for us. Amen.*

*Fr. Carles, Sch. P.  
General Superior*