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"To give birth to others"

Prot. MG 53/25

Re: Circular letter for Advent 2025

Dearest Sisters,

I am writing this letter to you at the conclusion of the Jubilee of the Orionine Charismatic Family (OCF). Those who participated directly, and those who participated spiritually through our communications, were able to see and feel the joy of being a Family, of walking and bearing witness together as pilgrims of hope.

I also cherish other experiences: the one in Argentina at the General Assembly of the OLM and the General Assembly of verification of the SDP. And then also the pilgrimage of the Orionine Charismatic Family to the Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida in Brazil, to the heart of the Mother who always loves and protects us. These circumstances have given me a new enthusiasm to live and promote the journey of communion, because we are created in the image of God—communion of Persons. In our charismatic history, the Virgin Mary demonstrated to Don Orione that under her celestial mantle we are a unique family with different faces, a unique People walking together in the complementarity of each member.

To walk together, as the Church encourages us today, we must cultivate and mature our personal and communitarian capability for relationships: nurturing our self-esteem, the awareness of our human dignity, and our ability to increasingly become a people in the image of God and do the same for others, especially those we encounter and with whom we live.

Mary Most Holy is for us a sublime example of this journey. She, humble servant of the Lord, beloved daughter of the Father, under the action of the Holy Spirit, welcomed the Son of God, Jesus, with her generous YES; she gave him to the world, and made him grow to accomplish his messianic mission. And today, each of us personally is called to live authentically the "baptismal" process of dying to the old self and being born as new creatures, "born from above, from the Spirit," and to fulfil this sublime mission toward others: "to give birth to others," as more beautiful, more fulfilled people, more aware of their divine sonship, "so that our joy may be full" (cf. Jn 15:11).

How can we give birth to someone?

This question could be a common thread in Advent 2025: a question, a restlessness, and a drive for research and action.

The Advent journey will be fruitful for us if we manage to grow in the sincere gift of self to help others live better at my side, in our community, in our work, in our service, in pastoral work.

In *"Fratelli tutti"* Pope Francis writes: "Human beings are so made that they cannot live, develop and find fulfilment except 'in the sincere gift of self to others' (GS 24). Nor can they fully know themselves apart from an encounter with other persons: 'I communicate effectively with myself only insofar as I communicate with others'. No one can experience the true beauty of life without relating to others, without having real faces to love. This is part of the mystery of authentic human existence. Life exists where there is bonding, communion, fraternity; and life is stronger than death when it is

built on true relationships and bonds of fidelity. On the contrary, there is no life when we claim to be self-sufficient and live as islands: in these attitudes, death prevails” (87).

And he continues his reflection: “In the depths of every heart, love creates bonds and expands existence, for it draws people out of themselves and towards others. Since we were made for love, in each one of us ‘a law of *ekstasis* seems to operate: the lover ‘goes outside’ the self to find a fuller existence in another”” (88).

Life is born from gratuitous love, like that of God. In the last two encyclicals, “*Dilexit nos*” and “*Dilexi te*” we find another common thread, a pressing invitation, almost a plea, to go in this direction to find joy.

This invitation is also found in our Constitutions and Norms, which we are studying again, and in the Guidelines and Decisions of our XIIIth General Chapter: “To be women, sisters, and mothers..., generators of ‘new life’, missionaries with a Samaritan heart...” We know that this happens “under the shadow of the Holy Spirit,” and the Saints are confirmation of this.

Some examples

The testimony of Juan Ravinalle, a former student of Don Orione, touched my heart. In 1905, he was expelled from the college of Don Bosco in Turin after two years, with the idea of placing him in a juvenile prison. The old parish priest of his village took an interest in him and sent him to the Paterno in Tortona. He recounts: “Don Orione read a letter I had, which had been given to me by my old parish priest... He looked at me fixedly, without uttering a single word, and gave me a handful of sweets”. Then he placed him in a room near to his to keep an eye on him. He got up with various mischiefs, but – Juan confesses – “Don Orione had set out to make me a man with meekness and patience, and he succeeded in obtaining it”. And he added that Don Orione jokingly said: “The Lord gave me two penances: this boy and this nag (old horse).”

Juan then moved to Argentina and found a good job. After nearly 25 years, learning that Don Orione had come to Argentina for the Eucharistic Congress in 1934 and finding out that he was staying at 2084 Calle Victoria (the sisters lived there, and still nowadays), he went to visit him. Here is his story: “It was 9.00 am; I announced myself as a former student without giving my name... There was no antechamber for me... He arrived... he threw his arms around me, saying my name, and big tears welled up in both our eyes.

That embrace, the most tender, the most affectionate, the most sincere, the purest of my entire life, I feel it in my heart every day, indeed, every moment of my life. I cherish many precious memories of Don Orione and manuscripts bearing his signature; but what better memory is my own person, which that holy man knew how to regenerate in my tender youth?”¹

For personal reflection

What value do we give to our glances, our acts of patience, our gestures of welcome, our words of encouragement?

Do we feel that just in our empathetic and patient relationship with the other a beneficial communication is taking place, which is able to give life, transform, and regenerate? Do you remember any moments?

In this Advent season, let us also learn from our dear sister, sr M. Plautilla, now Venerable, the charity that generates new life.

Sister M. Pellegrina testifies: “Sister M. Plautilla was patient, sweet, and always smiling. She sensed the needs of the sick and anticipated them. She was thoughtful, always available; when asked for a favour, she did everything possible to respond positively (...).

¹ From the texts of the Charismatic Itinerary during the Interprovincial Meeting in Buenos Aires (2009), pp. 123-126.

She loved everyone, forgave everyone, helped everyone. I never saw her get angry, raise her voice, or feel offended in any way, no matter what anyone did to her.

Certainly, her charity was a love that found its source in God and extended to her sisters, to the sick, and to everyone she met. Simple, sincere, she saw the good in others and loved to highlight it" (*Positio*, 18-20).

Sister M. Fiorina tells us: "I was sent to Paverano during the war to assist the nursing sister. During this time, I, who was completely unaware of the illnesses and treatments, found myself in direct contact with the sick. I was fortunate enough to have Sister Plautilla at my side, who was like a caring sister, helping and teaching me. In her, I found the embodiment of the 'Orionine sister' as it had been explained to me during my novitiate.

Twice a week, I had to spend the night with the sick. I confided to the Servant of God that I was afraid of remaining alone with those sick people, especially those who were mentally ill; my fear was above all that I wouldn't be able to properly care for any of them if they were in danger of death.

The Servant of God encouraged me and invited me to call her in case of need by simply touching her bed; she would dress and come to give me help (...).

She carried out her work as a nurse sister with so much love and joy, and with promptness even when she faced with repulsive patients. When she finished, she would caress their faces and say: 'Come on, see how beautiful you are now?'.

Her usual expressions, especially in difficult moments, were: 'Come on, courage, let's do everything for God! The Lord sees everything'.

If I had to ask her something, I didn't dare do so when I saw her praying. In fact, she used to say that, just as we find time for everything else, we must find it even more for God; she added that in prayer she found the strength to rebuild herself" (*Positio*, 80ff).

For personal reflection

Sr. M. Plautilla's charity found its source in God and extended to her sisters, to the sick and to everyone she met. Where do you find the strength to nourish your daily dedication in order to generate new life?

I asked some of you the question: "How can I give birth to someone...?" And I've received some wonderful answers...

One of our young sisters wrote: "For me, giving birth to someone means helping them discover themselves, flourish, feel alive and recognized. Humanly, this means: authentic welcome, truly listening without judgment, so that the other feels recognized; being a trustworthy person capable of supporting others; being capable of small, concrete gestures: encouragement, a smile; offering a witness of life: living with coherence and gratitude; providing opportunities for personal and professional growth, such as stages, training courses, and experiences; being present in difficult times; walking together spiritually; transmitting hope; praying for others; sharing the word of God; being present in their lives...".

Another response: "Giving birth to someone means, first of all, recognizing them as a person, with a name, an identity, a dignity, but to give birth to someone, you must first decentralize yourself to centre yourself in the other, you must be focused on the other and not self-referential".

Mary was able to give birth to Christ because she emptied herself, opened herself, and concentrated all of herself on the life growing within her womb and which she had to bring to fulfilment. She was completely focused on the child she was about to give birth to, without thinking of herself.

To help with childbirth, the midwife concentrates on the tiny, nascent child, awaits the baby's arrival with patience and respect, cares for his/her safety and health, and welcomes him/her with tenderness, dignity, and love.

Someone is born when he/she is considered, supported, helped to develop to their full potential, when their individuality is respected and valued.

Someone is not born, indeed he/she dies, when they are looked upon with indifference, when they are crushed, when their dignity and potential are ignored and trampled upon, when they are not considered worthy of attention, of delicacy, of being listened to, and made invisible in his/her being a person.

We can all give birth to someone, and we can all cause someone to "die"... if I have experienced life within myself and found the one who gave birth to me as a person, I will have the capability to give birth to someone to life, to joy, and to the sense of "God's paternal and maternal love".

I conclude with the third answer: "It is a very great service with a great deal of responsibility, so we must first prepare ourselves. Follow that person's evolution in daily life; open our hearts to welcome them and prepare everything necessary so that, when they are born, they will find everything ready, because their birth must not be improvised".

How do we prepare ourselves to be midwives of the life that presses to emerge in each one of us and that needs love, warmth, nourishment, recognition, education, goals and hopes?

How do we welcome those around us in the community, in the apostolate, in the service? Do we value their gifts, proposals, suggestions? Do we give space to the creative expression of their talents for the common good of the mission? Are we able of collaborating as a team, in dialogue, and in seeking solutions for a better quality of life?

There are many questions that arise in the heart. Advent is the time of waiting, preparation, and questions, as the Immaculate Virgin Mary experienced it. Together with Her, we experience this time of grace to continue our own process of birth to new life and to give birth to others, to "live Christ and make the whole world live of Christ," and to be able to sing at Christmas with heartfelt joy: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace among the men and women beloved by the Lord!" continuing this extraordinary adventure in the New Year 2026.

In communion with the Sisters of the General Council, I greet you and wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Sr M. Alicja Kędziora
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Superior general

The letter is read in the community accompanied by a brief resonance. During the Advent season, let us reflect on and make our personal proposals concrete. At the end of Advent, let us share our experience with the Sisters of the community.

Rome, General house, November 25th, 2025.