

DISCIPLES AND MISSIONARIES AMONG MIGRANT PEOPLE*

In the mystery of the incarnation, God broke the silence, came out of His mystery, and, by revealing His personal secrets, spoke about His wish to make an alliance with humanity, so that it could participate on His Life.

To celebrate the 113 years of the founding of the Congregation is to celebrate God's entering in the history of the migrant people and at the same time to celebrate God's love, as it is faithful to each Scalabrinian Missionary. God is revealed in the History. This certainty encouraged Mother Assunta to say that "our Congregation is a work of God". It was not only an aspiration nor merely a human project that sent us as "servants to the orphans and neglected people" 113 years ago, and that still send us as Missionaries of Saint Charles Borromeo, Scalabrinians, but the love of God for the migrant people that in the person of Priest Marchetti revealed that this "*wound in migration could only be healed by the presence of Women*". It was the blast of the Spirit that, with the same force of the creation and of the Pentecost Day, inspired the Blessed John Baptist Scalabrini to see "*in the migrant the Lord!*"

By celebrating the 113 years of the foundation, we are once again called to witness the presence of God, that walks along with the people on mobility, as He has done before throughout symbolisms as in the column of cloud (Ex 13: 21-22), the God's glory that filled the Dwelling (Ex 40: 34; Ez 8-10), the tent of the meeting (Ex 25-31; 35-40), the manna (Ex 16), the ark (Ex 25: 37), and in many other signs. Nowadays, He still manifest His presence, and conduce the journey of the people, throughout our action in the world of human mobility, along with many other mediations. It's a 113 year old journey: *Deo gratias!*

In the course of this journey we collected many examples. Along with the founder, John Baptist Scalabrini, and the co-founders, Father José and Mother Assunta Marchetti, it is very important for us to have as our patron Saint Charles Borromeo, example of humility and of *homo viator*. As Bishop of Milan, he developed, over a relatively short life, an intense pastoral activity, consuming his energy in the ascetic engagement, in charity and in the Church reform. He is among the grand promoters of the faith renovation and of the sanctioned customs by the Council of Trent. He expressed, through the seminars and the synodal disposition, a new model of "shepherd of souls", to which he could unite the austerity, and the prayer of the apostolic zeal. His pastoral charity was manifested especially during the famous Plague of Milan, when he was made a penitent pilgrim by the love for the suffering people.

What has moved the heart of these people and what led them to such grandiose actions? Certainly, the love for the cause that was embraced, the total offer of themselves, paths marked by exiles, exodus but also Easters; the conviction that **being disciple and missionary** is not a privilege of certain people, but the essence of being Christian: "I am under compulsion and I should be in trouble if I failed to preach the Gospel" (I Cor 9:16). Being a disciple of the missionary Christ is not only going through long distances, going to other continents, but it is also the difficult journey of getting out of yourself and meeting with the other, meeting with the "different ones", and meeting with the marginalized people, the preferred ones of Jesus.

We thank all our Sisters for the testimony as Scalabrinian Missionaries, those that have already passed for the celestial homeland and ended their pilgrimage and those that today open new paths in the migration world. Congratulations to everyone, and thanks for accepting to be a part of this history, building it with your own way of being *salt and light* in the world of human mobility.

Have a great Congregation Day and Saint Charles fest!

* Message written by Sister Elizangela Chaves Dias, mscs taking part in the celebration of the Congregation Day and Saint Charles fest.