



INSTITUTO CALASANCIO
HIJAS DE LA DIVINA PASTORA

Madrid, February 14, 2018

To the Sisters and Religious Communities
To those who share the Calasancian Educational Mission
of Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess
To those who feel attracted by the Calasancian Charism
of Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess
Bequeathed by Saint Faustino Míguez de la Encarnación

May the blessing of the Lord be for all of you, during this time of grace that the Church offers to us, one more year.

At the beginning of this Lent 2018, once again, comes to my mind one of the definitions of Saint Faustino of the Calasancian Religious: *Spouses of the one who was born in a manger and died naked on a Cross* (Cf. page 105). He dreams us going through an itinerary of poverty, following the One for whom we were passionate and for whom we continue to be passionate every day in our heart. And according to this, I propose to you and propose to myself, to live this Lenten time as a path of evangelical poverty.

In Lent we are always convoked to "more: more prayer, more fasting, more alms giving, more Word of God; and we, this year 2018, want to feel invited to more humility, more simplicity, more smallness, more poverty. And this, being certain that it is a grace that we have to desire sincerely and because we desire it, we ask for it as a gift, as a present, conscious or aware that it is not only the result of an effort on our part.

Being rich he became poor to enrich us with his poverty

In the text of Co. 2, 8.9 it is said of Jesus Christ, "That being rich he became poor for us, in order to enrich us with his poverty". And our Constitutions in number 25, also express the same.



INSTITUTO CALASANCIO
HIJAS DE LA DIVINA PASTORA

This is the style of God who does not reveal himself by means of the power and the richness of the world, but rather in weakness and poverty; because the true richness of Jesus poor is in his reality of being the Son, in his relationship with the Father. He became poor to enrich us with the only richness that He has and which is the Father.

A horizon of sense for a life in simplicity and poverty

In the Lord Jesus we find a horizon of sense for a life in simplicity and poverty: poor, simple, approachable, humble, and detached from self, to enrich others with the love of the Father that we have received as a gift.

Definitively, a path of lowering ourselves is proposed to us, in order to exult and raise others, since this is what the Lord Jesus did when going through this earth, and also because this is the reason for our educational ministry. It is a path of humility, that inclines us to communicate with the little ones to raise them and to accompany them toward God.

As educators we are called to raise, to involve, to recognize, to enrich. But this is only possible by having an attitude of a simple, poor heart which converts us in the possibility of recognizing the other, of surrendering without limit, of giving oneself without expecting anything in exchange.

Called to revise or examine our life-style

And this is the authentic sense of evangelical poverty, to which we are all called. Laitly and Religious each one according to our option as believers, we must all be ready to revise or examine our life-style and to reflect if this spirit of simplicity, of poverty impregnates our options of every day in the community, in the family, in school, in the educational community.

I desire for all that this Lent we feel that the Lord Jesus looks at us with a look of love and invited to sell every form of richness of which we are fond, or which makes us conceited: to abandon those securities which close us up in ourselves and which prevent us from detecting the reality of need of others, our neighbors next to us; to leave aside that life-style which creates false needs for us when in our world many of our brothers and sisters do not even have with what to cover their more basic needs.



INSTITUTO CALASANCIO
HIJAS DE LA DIVINA PASTORA

Hopefully that look will open us in solidarity to others, especially the weakest and suffering, and to follow Jesus, each one according to the call received, by the path of poverty and of smallness. For we know that our poverty is reflected in the service and attention to the poorest and those in greater need.

Lent is a favorable time to detach and ask ourselves from what can we deprive ourselves, also at material level, in order to help and enrich others with our poverty.

We ask the Lord to help us in this Lenten journey

Affectionate greetings,

Sacramento Calderón
Superior General