



Instituto Calasancio
Hijas de la Divina Pastora

“Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them.” (Lc 2, 20)

Madrid, January 2, 2023

**To the sisters and religious communities,
To those who share the Calasancian Educational Mission
Of the Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess,
To those who feel attracted by the Calasancian Charism
Of Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess,
Bequeathed by Saint Faustino Miguez de la Encarnación.**

J.R.E.N.C.

May "Jesus reign in our hearts and enkindles fire in us with his holy love," after celebrating these days of Christmas in which we have witnessed God's love for us. Today, like the shepherds, we too return praising and glorifying God. He who dwells in our hearts fills us with joy and will accompany us in this new year 2023. Happy New Year to all!

We feel fortunate to celebrate one more year the birth of the Institute; the Calasancian charism of the Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess is for all of us a beacon that shows us the sure and certain way to live better the consecration to the Lord and the service to others.

These are moments to give thanks and also times to admire God's work. There is always an abyss between the human instruments to which the Lord calls us and the greatness of the work of evangelization that we undertake. But we want to give this Life that we receive from God with gratitude, passion and tenderness.

God has called us to this Charismatic Family and to this Mission. It is not our work, and it is God who makes it flourish, but for us it means responding to it, updating it day by day and opening the way so that what the Lord wants from our Institute is fulfilled.

The strength of the charism is what pushes us to give the best of each one of us to live it to the full. And the richness of this call is so great that all of us find in it more

than what we need to fill our lives. The fruit that the Calasanctian charism of the Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess bears is produced when alive the mysterious combination of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the natural talent of the person who receives and develops it comes alive

We are called to live the Gospel in the footsteps of St. Faustino Miguez. His life of holiness is an invitation to each of us to seek the path that leads us to God according to the lay vocation or religious life, and that opens our horizons to respond to the needs of people. Saint Faustino was able to discover in Sanlúcar the need to dedicate time and passion to the work of educating girls, and he turned that need into the opportunity to build an institution dedicated to this mission, noble and great, but raised with the simplicity and humility of those who are authentic of heart, open to the newness of the Spirit and with the courageous thrust of the prophets.

This charism deserves to be lived, shared, deepened and developed by all of us. Its greatness is in the small seed that began to grow in Sanlúcar 138 years ago, with the dedication of the first religious, with the faith of many, and with the wavering of the Spirit that made it grow and became the living source of inspiration for later generations. Today we can experience its greatness on four continents, in ten countries, and we see how the charism can develop in different cultures and at different times in history with the freshness and richness that each of its members brings to it.

Just as in the manger in Bethlehem, just as in the birth of Jesus, the charism is a place of encounter, a place where fraternity is born and the mission to which we have been called is discovered.

May we know how to carry the prophetic voice, which comes from shared life, to our own evangelical and renewed Christian life, and may it make us better religious, better lay people, and may fraternal life in communities and families produce generous fruits in the educational mission that summons us and fills us with life.

In this new year 2023, I hope that the Spirit will make us "communities and groups going forth", which puts into action the charism received, and challenges us, and puts us in contact with the concrete and every day, with the people, in the midst of whom we are called to live and to whom we have been sent.

May Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother, accompany us with the care and tenderness of a mother. She will watch over our faith and our hope.

Faternally,



M. Mª José Sotelo Iglesias
Superiora General