



COMPAGNIA DI MARIA N. S.
Via Nomentana, 333 - 00162 ROMA

Tel. 06-841.76.75
Fax 06-841.26.24

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Carta nº 5

TO THE COMPANY OF MARY OUR LADY LAITY

Dear Friends:

Throughout the celebration of the 400th Anniversary of the Approbation of the Order by the Church we have been in frequent contact with you by means of our website, Communication Bulletins, and especially in the various gatherings that have taken place on an international level. All of this has been an opportunity to deepen our understanding of what it means to journey together, in one same direction, and to support one another from the uniqueness of our particular vocations. We feel tremendous gratitude, and above all, we have the firm belief that together we can continue to build the future, looking for appropriate responses to the major needs of our times.

Today the 2nd of February, we celebrate the closing of our anniversary year. On this day which is especially meaningful for the Company of Mary, Jeanne de Lestonnac enters the House of the Father in the year 1640. The end of her life seals her journey. Her existence was fertile, knowing how to unite tradition and creative development, bearing abundant fruit in her homeland, one that was visible and objective. As well, as bearing the kind of fruit that is seen only in the depths of one's heart

This event in the life of Saint Jeanne that we remember today, highlights this very human experience of coming to the end, thus, the need for transcendence: all closing experiences confront us with questions regarding the meaning of the event and its true worth. It also awakens within us desires to go beyond, to "go further," to grow in "being" more, to love more, desires for greater fulfillment, to not stop at any one goal, or boundaries."¹

Keeping this focus in mind, to take this celebration further is a call to continue offering, with renewed energy, who we are as a Company:

"open hands, soft hands, firm hands..."

¹ Conference by Dr. Francesc Torralba Roselló, "Educate in transcendence in a pluralistic world," International Education Congress in Barcelona, July, 2007.



active hands, wise hands, extended hands...

Hands that share in the saving mission of God: *reflecting His face in the education of others.*"²

The journey continues... we have committed ourselves to embrace and give life to the new insights that have emerged at this time:

"Art, Humanism and Spirituality," as a common theme in our proposed work of evangelization with young people.

Mobokoli, as a reminder that it is possible to work together on one same goal from the different contexts, in seeking greater justice and solidarity with the poorest on our earth.

We also have a commitment to advance in what has already been initiated:

Assist the progress of the Lay Network throughout the world.

Continue the reflection on the educational mission: specify ways of putting into practice in each reality what has been reflected upon on a universal level and look for strategies to expedite it.

Look for means to promote Bordeaux as a place of encounter and formation for lay people and religious, a place that is open to other institutions and groups.

We must respond to the personal and group challenge to "keep the flame alive," to be "a flaming blaze that ignites our lives in a such a way that others who draw near are set on fire, as well." ³.

We entrust this new century that we begin to Mary, Our Lady. Let us go forward together with confidence.

Affectionately Yours,

Beatriz Acosta Mesa, odn
and General Team

² Company of Mary presentation in the Education Congresses in Barcelona and Mexico. July and October, 2007.

³ *El libro de los abrazos*, Eduardo Galeano. Siglo XXI de España editores, 1994, p. 1.