

EUCARISTA CELEBRATION

- February 2nd 2016

HOMILY OF THE FATHER GENERAL SUPERIOR

Dear **Fr. Baby Elikal**, MI, Most Rev. Provincial of the Camillian Indian Province,

Dear **Fr. Vittorio Paleari**, MI, Most Rev. Provincial of the Nord Italian Province

Dear **Camillians confreres from India**, and coming from many different countries of the Camillian World: Italy, Poland, Austria, Ireland, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda and Brazil (in my person).

Dear **Sisters of Saint Camillus** present today here present among us!

We are living a special moment of God's grace and a historic moment of our rich Camillian history!

In this Eucharistic we are celebrating with the Universal Church the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple. In our Camillian World, we remember the conversion of Saint Camillus (February 2nd, 1575). In this same day in the church we are celebrating the closing of the year of the Consecrated Life, and closer to all our hearts, we are together in this Chapel to give thanks to the Lord for the passage of the "Vice-Province of India to "Camilian Province of India".

Like Jesus is presented officially in the Temple to the Jew community according to the religious prescriptions of the Judaism, today we are presenting to the Order, to the Camillian World, to the Church and why not, to the entire world this new, promising and young province of our beloved Camillian Order. This new Province is for us a brilliant Star in the sky of the Eastern world that brings new hope, youthfulness and life, to many camillian communities of the western world, specially in many countries of Europe, Eua and many other countries.

It's with great joy and hope that the General Government of the Camillian Order is accompanying and spiritually journeying with you with prayers in this special moment of God's Grace that the "Camillian Vice-Province of India" will be turning into "Camillian Province of India".

The date chosen for this historic celebration for the Camillians in India February 2nd. This date is a key moment in Saint's Camillus Life history. It's the turning point of his life, his conversion, when encountering God in his heart he restart his life all anew. Camillus was touched by Jesus in his life in such a deep way, that he immediately discovers the sick and poor ones, look for help them, and started a new organization for the good of wounded and suffering humanity. Here is the birth of our Camillian Order that today spread out in forty-one countries in the world searching to be a sign of hope, life and solidarity among those that are living today in the "in the peripheries of the human heart as well as in the geographical peripheries of the Planet" (Pope Francis).

In the year of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy indicted by Pope Francis, all our Camillian actions, must be marked by the sign of God's mercy! We are invited to rediscover again the **corporal and spiritual works of mercy** that are in the very heart of our Camillian Charism. Among these actions: heal the sick... bury the dead... comfort the afflicted...forgive offences...and so on!

In the Universal Church, we are just about to close the Year dedicated to the consecrated life (2015). We were invited to look to our history, our past with "gratitude", living the present with "passion" and we as Camillians "serving with Samaritan compassion" and embrace the future with hope. Let's us remember and be thankful to God to all those pioneers of the mother Province, Nord Italian Province, that gave their lives for the existence today of the Camillian Indian Province. In the world camillian geography of today, you are a strong sign of youthfulness, with a promising perspective of growth and expansion throughout the world, collaborating with other Camillian provinces worldwide. Journeying in this pace for sure God's Providence, will gift you, with a great future in India. Ahead of us, there's huge challenge, impossible to face it without God in our hearts. Maybe it's impossible to rationally understand, exactly in this moment we are call to trust in the One that chosen us to live our live in this special vocation as camillians. You are called to construct a very original and genuine Camillian history in this country, within a very challenging socio-cultural-political and religious context, that constantly defy our Christian faith and values. Be courageous in doing this history with faith, dedication, fidelity, testimony and samaritain compassion, taking care

of the sick and in the announcing the good news of health to everybody that you may creatively reach and touch, through your works and health care institutions.

Pope Francis, in his message for the occasion of the celebration of the Jubilee of the Consecrated life (10. February 2016), pointed out three main pillars of the consecrated life: *prophecy, Proximity and hope*. *Prophecy*, it's our specific mission, reminds us the People. To proclaim God, with our life before our words, as Merciful Father, "Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34,6; Sl 103,8). *Proximity* – God in Jesus was near of every woman and man, as a Good Samaritan. Following our Charism, caring for the sick, doing works of mercy is the permanent challenge for us Camillians. And the third pillar that Pope Francis reminds us is Hope. Hope in being testimony of God, of his merciful Love. We God's grace we can spread hope in the Shadows of the Humanity. Living in this way, we will have in the heart the JOY, precious sign of those that follow Christ.

My dear Camillians, confreres from India! In closing this message, I feel the need to recall from St. Camillus Testament Letter, "he sending us... a thousand blessings on the Lord God's behalf insofar as this is granted to me by him, not only to those of this present time but to all still to come who will be members of our holy Order until the end of the world".

Congratulations to all of you members of the new Camillian Province of India. God bless you all and may our founding father Saint Camillus protect and inspire you to be always Samaritan Camillians in the world of health, giving testimony of the God's compassion and mercy among the sufferers and sick ones.

Fraternally yours in Christ and Saint Camillus!

Fr. Leo Pessini - General Superior

Bangalore, February 2nd, 2016