

## ***GFASC – Missionary Year – Reflection 6***

### ***To give souls to the Sacred Heart of Jesus (To love is my mission)***

*“My wish for you is that you be able to give many souls to the Heart of Jesus, and above all to lead back many hearts which have been led astray, many sheep that are lost along wrong and dark paths.” (Blessed Clelia Merloni)*



Mother Clelia speaks to us of giving souls to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. How many people with this virus stand between life and death, how many live in solitude, deprived of affection, the sacraments, a smile, a moment of consolation! With our prayers and sacrifices we can save souls. In this time of the coronavirus, Mother Clelia invites us to bring many souls to the Sacred Heart. This is our mission today: to love, to pray, to be apostles and disciples of Jesus with our prayer. And how many people still live in the darkness of sin; we must pray for them.

“Don’t stay there racking your brain with constant reflections and questioning; surrender yourself to God; tell Him many times a day, even by a simple glance or thought, that you are ready to suffer everything rather than offend Him, and then let Him do the rest. The Heart of Jesus will not let your soul fall into the precipice; and if He wants you to feel that you are really at the brink, be patient and absolutely don’t let discouragement penetrate your heart. Remember, daughter, that nothing that disturbs come from God. God is peace, gentleness, and calm. Become familiar with that beautiful and consoling ejaculation: ‘In you, O Lord, have I hoped.’” (*Spiritual Anthology pp. 276-277*)

### **Word of God - Psalm 70: 1-6**

Graciously rescue me, God! Come quickly to help me, LORD! Let those who seek my life be confused and put to shame. Let those who desire my ruin turn back in disgrace. Let those who say “Aha!” turn back in their shame. But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you, those who long for your help always say, “God be glorified!” I am miserable and poor. God, come to me quickly! You are my help and deliverer. LORD, do not delay!

### **Isaiah 51: 9-11**

Awake, awake, put on strength, arm of the LORD! Awake as in the days of old, in ages long ago! Was it not you who crushed Rahab, you who pierced the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, you who made the depths of the sea into a way for the redeemed to pass through? Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; They will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.

### **Strong in the Face of Tribulation**

*The Church in Communion: A Sure Support in Time of Trial*

The grave situation in which many countries throughout the world have plunged, due to the very rapid spread of Covid-19, puts us all to the test. Unfortunately, we know that this crisis will not be resolved quickly, and that the pandemic is spreading. We are facing a state of affairs that until just a few weeks ago would have seemed unimaginable, like the premise of a science fiction film.

Everything has suddenly changed. What we previously took for granted seems to be uncertain: the way we relate with others at work, how we manage our emotions, study, recreation, prayer, even the possibility of attending Mass. In any case, the most serious aspect is that this epidemic – like every epidemic – is not only a threat to habits formed over time. It is, above all, the cause of many deaths, of great pain, and great suffering. Thousands of people are gravely ill, thousands have died. Many families mourn their loved ones, to whom they were unable to stay close, to

whom they were unable to say farewell, and who were cremated without the possibility of a funeral.

A characteristic of death in the time of Covid-19 is indeed solitude, the impossibility of having one's loved ones close by, the impossibility of receiving the Sacraments, of going to confession, of being accompanied in one's last breath by a friendly voice other than that of doctors or nurses working in hospital wards, pushed to their limits. We all owe a debt of gratitude to them, as they fight on the front line for people's lives every day. Alongside them, we must remember civil servants, those who provide strategic activities, the many volunteers who continue to help those most in need, the elderly who are alone, and the poor. Also to be remembered are the many priests, and men and women religious who share the sufferings of their people. Many of them have sacrificed their lives.

For many members of the faithful, the impossibility of participating in the liturgy and partaking of the Sacraments aggravates this condition of uncertainty, discomfort and confusion, even though the Church invites us to renew our faith in the Risen Christ, who conquered death, and made it the place of the sure encounter with the loving face of the Father. The present difficulties have stimulated the creativity and inventiveness of many priests, who by using the new means of communication, make themselves present in the life of their communities and families confined to their homes in semi-deserted cities.

The evidence of what is happening demands that we too live this time for the benefit of all, especially for those most at risk, in the solitude of our homes, hospitals and nursing homes. Of course, the questions of faith remain, for not even as believers have we been educated recently to live through such crises, to experience ecclesial communion in spite of separation and distance, without yielding to the temptation of an entirely personal devotion.

It is useful to remember that it is certainly not the first time that humanity, and Christians, have found themselves facing these types of events. Christian faith, lived daily in its essential elements, generates an outlook on reality. It provides the possibility of glimpsing the hand of a God Who is a good Father and Who has loved us so much that He sacrificed His Son for us. The Church thus bears in the treasury of her living tradition, a treasury of wisdom, of hope, the opportunity to continue to experience – in solitude or even in isolation – that we are

truly “one” thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit. (*Strong in the Face of Tribulation, Introduction, Dicastery for Communication of the Holy See, 2020*)

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**Sharing:**

At this time when the world is struck by Covid-19, what reflection can we make? Surely we are recovering many values: family, affection, prayer, the Church, silence, interior life, love charity, confidence, life and death.

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**Pledge**

*With Mother Clelia we commit ourselves:* “Put into that Heart, then, with total trust, all your fears, all your anxieties; pray, receive communion with fervor, work generously to acquire those virtues which cost you the most, and God will know when and where to so surprise you that you will be happy and moved to tears.” (*Spiritual Anthology p. 192*)

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**Prayer**

Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm. Tell us again: “Do not be afraid.” And we, together with Peter, “cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us.” (*Pope Francis*)

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*“Remember, will a heart that has not suffered ever know how to compassionate and console one who cries? What can a soul who has not experienced remorse for her infidelities, who has never heard the voice of God asking her for a sacrifice, answer to one who comes to her seeking a little consolation?” (Blessed Clelia Merloni)*

