



"The journey together with the Risen Jesus"

Casante's Easter Message

*"As they conversed and discussed together,
Jesus himself approached
and walked along with them"* (Lk 24:15)

Dearest Brothers and Sisters of the **C**alabrian **F**amily,

I am very happy to be able to address my fraternal greeting to all of you and to wish you a happy and Holy Easter with the greeting of the Risen Jesus: "*Peace be with you!*".

We have the grace and the opportunity, also this year, to celebrate and live the Easter of the Risen Jesus. The context we are living through is still marked by pandemic and war; in particular, our thoughts turn to all those who are experiencing situations of great difficulty and suffering. Let us give them the support of our prayer, so that the dream of much desired peace may be realized as soon as possible.

We are a few days away from the long awaited and desired celebration of the General Chapters of the Poor Servants. I thought it appropriate to share with you some brief consideration, lingering to contemplate the Evangelical icon of Jesus on his way with the disciples of Emmaus: "*As they were conversing and discussing together, Jesus himself approached and walked along with them*".

The experience of itinerance, of going toward a place, of walking, is constitutive of our being pilgrims. Human life is dynamism, it goes forward, it is directed towards a destination, and God comes to meet the man of every time to accompany him and to walk with him; He stands beside us, listening, in order then to be able to give meaning and significance to the deepest questions with His word and His presence.

The presence of the Risen Jesus in the two Disciples' journey and in the journey of every disciple is fundamental, because it fills us with meaning and allows us to look at the events of our life and history in the light of his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

As Calabrian Family, in this special time in preparation for the Chapters, we also walk on the synodal path of verification, mutual listening and discernment. The time we are living, and are called to live even more deeply in the experience of the Chapter, is a time of pilgrimage. As we walk together, we verify the walked path, we confront each other, we dialogue, we "discuss" those things that we find to be essential for the Opera in this time. We do not travel this journey alone. The Risen Jesus reaches us, puts Himself at our side and walks along with us. He participates to our dialogues, questions us, provokes us, arouses in us the desire for truth, enlightens us with His Word and lets Himself be met and recognized by us! Like the disciples of Emmaus, let us look up, let us turn to Him our pleases and our cry: "*Stay with us, Lord!*"

What made the difference on the way to Emmaus was the presence of the Risen Jesus. Their journey, even if together conversing and discussing, would have been meaningless and without significance, discouraging, if there had not been the presence of Jesus among them. This step, that may appear to be of little value, is actually very valuable. Everything acquires deep meaning and significance with the presence of Jesus, because it is Him who gives a new value to their experience. In our lives and in the Calabrian Family it can be the same. With his presence, everything regains meaning and depth, and we discover the true value of our life and our mission in contemporary world.

The Risen Jesus opens their eyes and hearts. It is a side by side walk, full of life, of a tangible and significant presence. It warms up the Disciples' hearts, and encourages them to retrace with strength their steps, to confirm their brothers and sisters that the Lord is alive, has risen and has appeared to them.

Contemplating this image of the Emmaus Disciples' journey, we are also called this Easter to make room for the Risen Jesus in our daily lives: let Him walk with us, let Him be close to us in our sorrows and disappointments, let us discover Him while experiencing fraternity, let Him animate and accompany our sadness and sufferings, rekindle our hopes, encourage our charity and lead us to the path towards good and love for everyone.

We also ask for the Grace that flows from Easter, to be able to experience the Risen One, like the Disciples of Emmaus did. *"As they conversed and discussed together, Jesus himself approached and walked along with them"*.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I take the opportunity of this message to thank all of you for your prayers, for your support, for your affection and for your closeness throughout these years.

It has been very nice to have travelled this part of my life as Casante of the Opera together with all of you; I truly carry this experience in my heart as a gift of grace and mercy from the Lord.

I apologize to all if I did not put myself at complete service, and if I did not correspond to the full extent of what the Lord asked me.

Pray for me so that I can always and at all times do the will of God.

I remember you in my prayer.

Happy and Holy Easter! May the Lord bless you all.

Fraternally.


Fr. Miguel Tofful

