

Thy Kingdom Come!

Mexico City, March 12, 2015

To the members of the Regnum Christi Movement,  
in preparation for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the foundation

Dear Friends in Christ,

For several days we have already been underway on our Lenten journey with Christ. This past Sunday the liturgy brought us to the temple in Jerusalem to contemplate how Christ purifies it of the merchants who had overrun it and how he announces that his body is the true temple into which we are incorporated through baptism. Years later Saint Peter will remind the Christians, "Let yourselves be built, like living stones, into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2: 5). Knowing that it is the Lord who builds the house and that whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall not be disappointed, Peter was driven to live the present moment passionately and to throw himself into the mission of evangelization, trusting completely in God's action.

We too have a chance to become aware of the presence of God both in our personal life and as living stones in the building that is the Church (Eph 2: 19-22). On January 3, 2016, we will commemorate 75 years since the foundation of the Legion of Christ. Although it could very well be seen as just one more anniversary, this celebration should be seen as a Jubilee, which "in the Christian view ... is a *particular year of favor* ... [a year that] has an important and significant role in the lives of individuals and communities" (Saint John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, n. 15).

In the Old Testament we find the tradition of the Jubilees and it continues on in the age of the Church, since Jesus has come "to bring glad tidings ... and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (Lk 4: 18-19). In celebrating the Jubilees we fulfill our Christian duty to redeem and sanctify time, dedicating it to God in a special way. This is expressed through the liberation of slaves, the pardoning of debts, and the restoration of equality to all the children of Israel (see *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 12-14).

#### *1. The celebration of the Jubilee year in the Movement*

After reflecting about it in the Regnum Christi General Committee, it seemed appropriate that we also celebrate a Jubilee year to thank the Lord for his gifts and for his mercy during these 75 years in the life of the Legion and of the Movement. The Jubilee year will begin on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart in 2015 and end on the Solemnity of Pentecost in 2016.

Through this letter I wish to offer you some suggestions as to how to live this time of grace which the Lord in his providence offers us.

The Jubilee should be a time to rejoice, to give thanks, to ask forgiveness and to receive forgiveness. It is a moment to raise up petitions to the Lord of history and of human consciences (see *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 16). At the same time it offers a prime context for coming together as brothers and sisters in order to grow in unity and collaboration and to come together around all that which unites us within the Regnum Christi and within the distinct local churches in which the Lord has invited us to undertake our earthly pilgrimage. It is an especially privileged moment to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Church and, within her, to us (see Rev 2: 7 ff.).

The Jubilee period is also a time of purification of the memory, by which each person in particular, as well as the institution as a whole, has to recognize, as did the people of Israel, that "we have sinned" (see 1 Kgs 8: 26). This enables us to experience as well, as we have already done through celebrating the assemblies and the General Chapter, that where sin abounded grace overflowed all the more (see Rom 5: 20). It is a fitting moment to beg for and to accept in our lives the grace of conversion.

It is a moment to be reconciled and to go out in search of the son who has gone away from the house of the Father, as well as to return when we have been that son or daughter. Hopefully no one feels himself excluded from our spiritual family nor, for whatever reason, adopts the attitude of the older brother who did not want to come in for the feast (see Lk 15: 25-30).

It seems to me that the celebration of these 75 years of history ought to be characterized by a sober and humble joy. Years ago we were convinced that our charism was a part of the new springtime of the Church. Today we continue to be certain that it is the Lord who has raised up our spiritual family, at the same time recognizing that weeds also grow in our field and that we have experienced human fragility and sin. Yet despite these weaknesses, we know that Christ lives, that he accompanies us today, and that we can rejoice today because his goodness cannot be extinguished and his mercy is eternal (see Lam 3: 22).

## 2. Some guidelines for the celebration

This celebration of the 75th anniversary will take place primarily on the local level, with special emphasis being given to the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart in 2015. During the year other activities, for example conferences and congresses in the sections, schools, apostolates and in the localities, can be organized in order to go deeper into the charism of the Legion and Regnum Christi and its contribution to the various areas of Christian living. In addition retreats, moments of adoration, and other liturgical and devotional celebrations can be taken advantage of to thank the Lord for his gifts as well as to make reparation to the Sacred Heart for the times when we personally have not lived the Gospel radically or coherently.

Everyone's active participation in the reflection on the Regnum Christi Movement might prove especially fruitful. The meetings, study sessions, conventions, and so forth foreseen in the program made by the Central Commission for the Revision of the Statutes offer a magnificent occasion to deepen in the understanding of the diverse vocations that make up the body of Regnum Christi and of the essential elements of the charism.

The Youth and Family Encounters or similar get-togethers in the countries where they can be organized can also provide an opportunity to rediscover our vocation and mission, to thank God together, and to ask the Holy Spirit to send us with renewed enthusiasm to announce the Gospel and to form apostles at the service of Christ and the Church.

The Solemnity of Christ the King in 2015 should also be specially celebrated in each city. Try to make it a moment of fraternity and of a renewed commitment that Jesus Christ reign in the hearts of people and in society. In each locality it will be seen in which concrete way the feast of our patron will be celebrated.

On December 12, 2015, the ordination of a group of Legionaries to the priesthood will take place in Rome. There will be no special celebrations or pilgrimages organized other than those which are usual for the ordinations.

On January 3, 2016, or, when it is not possible to do it on that day, on a date close to this, a Mass of Thanksgiving should be celebrated in each locality.

The Jubilee year will close on Pentecost in 2016. We will prepare ourselves for this feast with a special novena. Moreover it is foreseen that around that time the first stage in the process of revision of the Statutes of the members of the first and second degree of Regnum Christi will conclude.

Given that Regnum Christi has a decidedly apostolic and evangelizing dimension, I want to invite all the members of the Movement to try and participate during the Jubilee year in missions of evangelization, catechesis in parishes or schools, or any other apostolate in which you can explicitly announce that the Kingdom of Christ is already present in our midst and help others to find him, especially through charity and the courageous proclamation of the Good News.

Activities can also be organized that could provide the chance for reentering into contact with persons who have participated in Regnum Christi or in its works of apostolate (e.g. former students, former apostolics, former Legionaries, consecrated men or women) and, whenever it might be the case, for reconciliation.

In the same way, I invite the section directors to try and give a renewed push to the Regnum Christi courses and to the ECYD conventions during this Jubilee year. The themes can be whatever is most applicable to each group, but one should try to ensure that they foster the encounter with Christ and the joy of living the Gospel together and of being sent out to establish the Kingdom of Christ.

In this year we also celebrate the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the novitiates of the Legion of Christ in Germany and Italy. It will also be a moment to thank the Lord for the gifts with which he has enriched us through the members of the Movement and the Legionaries of those countries and for the service which we have been able to provide to those local churches. There are probably other anniversaries in other cities which we overlooked but which it also would be fitting to celebrate in order to thank the Lord and to renew ourselves.

We will also try to foster the publication of writings which can help to transmit better our spirituality and to delve more deeply into our history, identity and mission. Our universities can offer a valuable service in this field.

The Second Vatican Council affirmed that "the Church seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ under the lead of the befriending Spirit. And Christ entered this world to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served" (*Gaudium et Spes*, n. 3). Regnum Christi, a living body within the Church, thanks the Lord for these first 75 years of life. It wants to commit itself with passion and humility in each of its members to the task of evangelization, and to live the future following in the footsteps of Christ, who being rich made himself poor to enrich us with his poverty (see 2 Cor 8:9).

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of mercy, accompany us as we prepare for the upcoming Jubilee year and inspire us to do in every moment whatever Jesus tells us.

Assuring you of a remembrance in my prayers,

Fr. Eduardo Robles Gil, LC