



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS

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Prot. 3455

Rome, Easter 2022.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Easter is the feast of joy, when the joy of the resurrection fills our hearts with hope and gratitude. It is more important than ever to experience the depth of Easter and what is the true joy of Easter for us, when we look around in the world and see so many troubles around. Sometimes it looks right to ask: how can we discover the glory of God among so many difficulties? What is our duty? How can we find the joy of Easter?

We are facing many challenges. Many people all around the world, including many of our sisters and brothers are living in war, in food crisis, in water crisis, in financial crisis or hit by natural disasters. Many are still suffering from the Covid-19 pandemic or from other diseases. All these things have caused a financial crisis, that has hit the world. Beside this, what is not less important, we are facing moral challenges, too. We have to face such moral questions which we never had to answer before, and as I said in the report of the CIOFS Presidency at the General Chapter, we can see less divinity and therefore, less humanity in the world. The fight between the good and the evil is taking more and more time and space. What I invite you all now is to remember that the ultimate victory can never be won by evil. Christ has won the ultimate victory on the cross. This is what we celebrate, and in spite of every difficulty, misery, poverty and marginalization, illness and weakness, Easter is a feast of joy, the feast of the glory of God.

In human terms the glory of God is not a success story. When Jesus died on the cross, there was only a small audience, no applause, no big catharsis except those who understood that the glory of God is in the sacrifice, in the love, in becoming “obedient to death, even death on a cross”<sup>1</sup>. In the end of the story, however, it is not a failure but the best what could ever happen, the resurrection, the new life. The glory of God is not what we expect but what God wants to give us in his eternal love.

In this situation what we can see around us we shall do a lot of things and many of us are doing a lot of important and good things. We have to do our best to relieve the sufferings of those being hit by war, by disasters, by poverty. I would like to say thanks from the depth of my heart to all of those, who have expressed their solidarity for our brothers and sisters in need during these hard times. It is the sign of the true Franciscan generosity and fraternal spirit.

In the last General Chapter we discussed the topic of leadership. It is a very important aspect of our life as being seculars, belonging to an Order. In order to stay on the right path in leadership, now in the time of Easter we have to fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the perfect leader. We can learn from him, how to be good servant leaders. “I didn’t come to be served but to serve”<sup>2</sup>. We have to learn how to help one another to live the secular Franciscan vocation, how to live the faith in Him.

We often seek Jesus lifting our heads and looking upwards, thinking that our leader has to be higher than we are. The truth is, that we should look down, because Jesus is there, washing our feet, right now. The tools of our leadership should be the washbowl and the towel. All those of us, who have the service of leadership, should not want to be looked at up high, but should be looked at down, while

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<sup>1</sup> Phil. 2:8

<sup>2</sup> Mt. 20:28

we are washing the feet of the others. Who should be an example for others, has to live from the example of Jesus. We should take all aspects of the life of Jesus, including the service of others, the deep personal contact with the Father, the temptations, the persecution, even the cross. Otherwise, we are admirers who look at him from a distance but not disciples.

Let us bring the good news to the world! Let our fraternities be the signs of this faith, hope and love, places of shining generosity of offering our services freely, places like the opened arms of Jesus welcoming and embracing everyone, places of deep prayerful spirit and places of prophetic visions of our Christian and Franciscan vocation!

I invite all of you to fix our eyes to the cross, which is the symbol of love: a sacrifice of love which endures until the death, and rises to eternal life so that everyone may have eternal life. This is the glory of God, and this is our hope.

I wish you all a blessed Easter!

Your brother and your minister



Tibor Kauser  
CIOFS general minister

