

The suggestions have been studied in Rome, with the help of experts, both women and men, in order to present specific proposals at the Congress. Those that were not relevant to the request of the Holy See contained in the *motu proprio* can be considered, as I mentioned in my October message, during the next Work Weeks, when they are organized, and will help to prepare the next Ordinary General Congress in 2025. They are very valuable material, for which I again want to thank you.

During these days, the meetings of the congress women and men will be held in parallel and I will take part in both, together with the Vicars. They will take place in the Roman College of Holy Mary and the Roman College of the Holy Cross. Both will begin with Holy Mass. In successive sessions, the proposals that have been prepared will be studied and on the last day the final text will be voted on. We will finish with benediction with the Blessed Sacrament and the praying of the *Te Deum*.

Unlike other General Congresses, whether elective (where the Prelate is elected) or ordinary (where some apostolic priorities are set), in this case it won't be possible to communicate immediately the final result, since it must be sent to the Dicastery for the Clergy to be studied by the Holy See, who is responsible for approving it.

All the General Congresses are very special moments of unity among the entire Work, and of the Work with the Holy Father and with the whole Church. During these weeks, we want our Father's aspiration to be especially present: *Omnes cum Petro ad Iesum per Mariam*.

Rome, March 30, 2023

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Message of April 17, at the End of the General Congress

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

The Extraordinary General Congress has just ended and I want to write to thank you again for your prayers. During these days we have asked

in a special way for the help of the Holy Spirit. We have seen clearly once again the ties of filiation and fraternity that unite us, as well as love for the Church and the Holy Father. At the same time, in the moments of family life, it was easy to thank God for so many initiatives of evangelization and service to souls throughout the world. With people from so many countries coming to Rome, it was also natural to keep all of Opus Dei very present, all the cooperators and friends, to pray for one another and, especially, for those of you who live in countries ravaged by war, or by various forms of poverty and need.

During the past few days, your sisters and brothers in the Congress have been able to work in depth on the suggestions coming from all the regions, and a proposal for adjustments to the Statutes was drawn up that responds to the request of the Pope in the *motu proprio Ad charisma tuendum*, which will be sent to the Holy See in the upcoming months.

As I told you in my previous message, the suggestions that were not applicable to what the Holy See was asking for now can be studied during the next Work Weeks and in preparation for the next Ordinary General Congress, which will be held in 2025. As I also told you, unlike other congresses in which some apostolic priorities are set, the sole purpose in this case was to prepare the aforementioned proposal. Therefore the final result can only be known after the Holy See, which has the final word, has reviewed it.

In our work during these days, we have been guided by two fundamental criteria: fidelity to the charism that Saint Josemaría received on October 2, 1928, and filial adherence to the will expressed by the Holy Father. As requested by the Pope in his *motu proprio*, efforts have been made to express more clearly the charismatic dimension of the Work (cf. *Ad charisma tuendum*, no. 4), which is lived and carried out in communion with the particular churches and with the Bishops presiding over them. The Prelature of Opus Dei is a family that is the result of bonds of paternity, filiation and fraternity.

These days of the congress have been marked by an atmosphere of serenity and also good humor, and by the active participation of everyone. Each has been able to express themselves with complete freedom, both in

the working groups and in the plenary sessions. In addition, I want to emphasize that, when studying the suggestions, a great harmony has been noticed among many people from very diverse backgrounds, and with a varied formation and culture. It has been an eloquent manifestation of unity in the “gift of the Spirit received by Saint Josemaría” (*Ad charisma tuendum*, preamble).

Rome, April 17, 2023

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Message of May 25

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

During this month when, in the Work, we want to fill the whole world with pilgrimages, a deep thanksgiving arises to my heart, confident of the fruit that will come through our Mother’s intercession on placing so many intentions in her hands.

Certainly, God gives this fruit when he wants and how he wants. And first of all, he grants it to ourselves, since our prayer – even if it is fragile – enables us to receive so many gifts that our Lord wants to give us: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened” (*Mt 7:7-8*). Let us boldly beseech heaven on our pilgrimages for so many graces for peace in the world, for personal conversion, for vocations. This attitude helps us to grow in the certainty that we need God, which is already a first fruit: it strengthens our awareness that he is the one who brings everything forward. And to help us feel welcomed, he offers us an easy and gentle path: our Lady. “We go to Jesus – and we ‘return’ to him – through Mary” (*The Way*, 495).

In this mission in the world that Christ wanted to share with us (“I am with you always, to the end of the age” (*Mt 28:20*)), by his closeness he gives his joy to us. Each time we go to visit our Blessed Mother to show her our affection, we can foster the desire to live at every moment, in every circumstance of our day, facing both difficulties and joys, with the