



Synod
2021
2023
For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Reflection 11

*Following Clelia's Footsteps
Toward the Heart of Jesus*

GFASC – A LAY GROUP LINKED WITH THE APOSTLES OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Letter of Mother Miriam to GFASC

Dear GFASC families,

“Trust in the Heart of Jesus, and you will see miracles if necessary.”

(Blessed Clelia Merloni, Mg., I,

p. 155)

I write this letter to wish you all a Happy Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to assure you that I beseech His divine Heart to continue to bless every family that lives His spirituality by spreading His devotion according to the charism that the Holy Spirit gave to Mother Clelia, our dearest Mother Foundress.

In addition, I want to ask for your prayers for the 18th General Chapter of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to be held in Rocca di Papa, Italy, from July 4-30, 2022. The General Government, after studying the theme "Charismatic Family" during the last six years, realized that it would be difficult for the Congregation to constitute such a Family without having other officially existing branches in addition to that of the Religious sisters. Therefore, it was decided to present to the Chapter Assembly the request for canonical recognition of the GFASC Group as a Lay Group, linked to the Institute, by approving the Statute of the Association of the Lay Faithful - GFASC at the international level.

Obviously, constituting a Charismatic Family will require a further step, which would be the existence of other groups recognized by the Institute worldwide; but at present we only have GFASC.

Therefore, I ask for your prayers for this moment so significant and important for the history of the Congregation and for you, so that everything will work to the honor and glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and together, as Apostles and Families, we can witness to the fruitfulness and relevance of Clelia Merloni's charism.

I embrace you with affection as I remain united with each family with my prayer!

Sacred Heart of Jesus, we trust in YOU!

Mother Miriam Cunha Sobrinha
Superior General

GREAT NEWS FROM THE 18th GENERAL CHAPTER!!!

The Chapter Assembly, gathered at Rocca di Papa on July 16, 2022, accepted GFASC as a lay group linked with the Institute of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Let us pray that very soon it will become an Association of Lay Faithful approved by the Church.

May the Sacred Heart and Mother Clelia continue to bless and illumine the vocation and mission of GFASC.

THE APOSTLES OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS



The Institute of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was founded in Viareggio, Italy, in 1894, by Blessed Clelia Merloni (1861-1930).

Following their motto from St. Paul, "The Love of Christ Impels Us," the sisters serve in the areas of education, health care, and social services. In this, they continue Mother Clelia's dream to "bring a ray of the tenderness of the love of Jesus' Heart to all people." This was a dream of faith and hope that has been accomplished admirably, embracing the entire world.

From the foundation of the Institute, Clelia Merloni never put geographical limits on the service her Apostles would offer for the Reign of God.

The Institute grew in number and geographical presence. Today, the Apostles serve in 14 countries: Italy, USA, Brazil, Mozambique, Haiti, Portugal, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Albania, Benin, Switzerland, and Ireland.

Clelia realized very early that if she had followed her father's footsteps in a brilliant career her life would never have been fulfilled. Intelligent, talented, and enthusiastic, she generously responded to God's call and chose the consecrated life.

To accomplish God's will and to lead the sisters, Mother Clelia had to face painful trials, undergo profound humiliations, and bear unspeakable suffering for many years. She lived generously and humbly, accepting the daily sacrifices and forgiving those who were the cause of her suffering.

Mother Clelia died in Rome on November 21, 1930. She was buried in the cemetery Campo Verano. In 1945 her body was exhumed and found intact and was transferred to the Generalate chapel.

On January 27, 2018, the Holy Father signed the decree recognizing a miracle, thus completing the process of Beatification. The Rite of Beatification was celebrated on November 3, 2018, in the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome.

Mark 1: 14-20 – Come follow Me

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God:

“This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen.



Jesus said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Then they abandoned their nets and followed him. He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he

called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

- **How did Jesus call you to join GFASC?**
- **How do you feel about being part of GFASC, and now part of a lay group associated with the Institute?**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING TO JESUS

We trust in Jesus: in his goodness and power, in the help that he gives us in every moment. This trust, that constantly grows from experience, brings us to thank him with all our heart. R: ***Thank you, Lord Jesus.***

- Thank you, Jesus, for loving me always.
- Thank you, Jesus, for your love which casts out anxiety and fear from my heart.
- Thank you for being near me in all the easy and difficult moments of life.
- Thank you for providing for all my needs according to your greatness
- Thank you for ensuring that all things work out for my good.
- Thank you for opening my eyes, my heart, and my hands to love and assist my needy brothers and sisters.
- Thank you for appointing your Angels to care for me and protect me in all my ways.
- Thank you, Jesus, for the great gift of GFASC.
- Thank you, Jesus, for the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.
- Thank you, Jesus, for the charism of Mother Clelia and for the possibility to follow in her footsteps.

“Fix and establish in your heart that God alone is your good and your only refuge.” (Mother Clelia Merloni)

