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November 21, 2026
Feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple
Circular letter n.8

Dear Sisters.

The Feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple holds special significance for us, not only because it marks the anniversary of our Passionist Family's birth, but also because of the renewal of our vows, as St. Paul of the Cross established in the Rule.

What does it mean for us to renew our consecration to the Lord on this feast day? It is good for each of us to ask ourselves this question. I would like to offer some points of reflection: renewing our vows means renewing our spiritual life profoundly, opening ourselves to new perspectives and broadening our intellectual and spiritual horizons so that we may walk with the Church ever more closely, under Mary's guidance, in fidelity to our charism.

St. Paul of the Cross chose to offer himself to the Lord on this feast of Mary so that he might live out his consecration accompanied and supported by her. This feast should inspire us to come to know Mary ever more deeply and to follow her. I would like to share with you some reflections by Pope Leo XIV, taken from his address at the conclusion of the 26th International Mariological Congress on September 6, 2025. These meditation points bring us ever deeper into harmony with the Church at this time.

Emphasizing that the Mariological Congress recognized *"in the jubilee and in synodality two biblical and theological categories for effectively expressing the vocation and mission of the Mother of the Lord,"* the Pope presents Mary in two aspects: as a "*jubilant"* woman and as a *"synodal"* woman.

"*As a jubilant woman, Mary is always ready to respond by first listening to the Word […]. As a "synodal" woman, she is fully and maternally engaged in the action of the Holy Spirit, who summons those who previously believed they had reasons to remain divided due to mutual distrust and even enmity as brothers and sisters"*

Following Mary's example and with her help, we too have to become *"jubilant"* women through persevering fidelity to personal and communal Lectio Divina, for the Word of God will always help us to resume our journey whenever we become discouraged or drift away from the Lord because of small acts of unfaithfulness to his love or because of our slowness and indifference. Becoming *"synodal"* women means growing in listening and

mutual dialogue, developing co-responsibility in our communities, and strengthening collaboration and mutual support, not only in our work but also in our spiritual life.

Pope Leo emphasizes "*the image and message of the Mother of Jesus as a way of encounter and dialogue between cultures. Indeed, as the perfect cooperator with the Holy Spirit, she never ceases to open doors, build bridges, break down walls and help humanity to live in peace and in the harmony of diversity".* Let us ask ourselves honestly: in my community, do I truly commit myself to opening the door of my heart to every sister with sincere charity? To build bridges between sisters? To break down the walls that sometimes separate us from one another because of jealousy and envy, or because of a lack of empathy and understanding? These attitudes have no place in the life of Christians and even less so in the life of consecrated people.

As we renew our consecration to the Lord, let us recommit ourselves to following Christ, holding Mary's hand and asking her - the Superior of all our monasteries - to obtain for us from the Holy *Spirit "the full understanding of this offering that she first made to the Lord"* (Const. 11).

With all my heart I wish a blessed feast day to all of you
also on behalf of my Council!

In sisterly love and prayerful communion with Mary
and St. Paul of the Cross

Sr. M. Gertrude Poggio cp

President

