



Rivers of Living Water

11th GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF LAY CLARETIANS FINAL DECLARATION



SPRING AND STREAM

In this 11th General Assembly (Leioa 2023), with grateful we celebrate the 40 years since the reorganization of lay Claretians as a Movement. It has been a time of grace, during which we have felt accompanied by the Holy Spirit and kept in the Heart of Mary; and where service, care and communion with our brothers and sisters have been felt at all times.

The guiding theme of our Assembly, "**Rivers of Living Water**" (Jn 7, 38) prompts us to reflect on the quality of our missionary action amidst the realities of the world that we, as laypeople, are called to evangelise, and discover keys and strategies that allow us to improve it.



DAMS / STONES / PONDS

Our movement is like a river that has been flowing for some years now. Each step we have taken up to this point is significant, because it has made us progress, but also stumble. The life of a layperson is not easy, as there are many family, responsibilities, financial aspects, job situations, etc. However, we know that the greatest challenge lies within us: in our vocation as Lay Claretians, there is a clear call to live in service. The gifts God has given to each of us must be put at His service and that of the brothers and sisters.

The awareness of missionary identity grows when we nourish our faith life. but we often find it difficult to leave our "comfort zones", and we delegate our involvement in the Movement.

The stones we encounter along the way are both external and within us:

We live in a secularised and individualistic society, that promotes values opposed to the Gospel; all this together with economic and social crises, armed conflicts, institutionalised violence, create fears than paralyse us from being steadfast witness, being coherent between our faith and life, and from seeking creative ways to evangelize today's world.

However, our commitment to gathering together and our perseverance in prayer have made our communities a "constant stream of life" that has been filling our flow. Despite the difficulties, weariness fatigue and problems, God has accompanying us and the Holy Spirit has equipped us to keep growing, seeking new horizons, just as the rivers seek new courses.



HORIZONS

Our charisma is a gift of the Spirit and we want to make God's dream a reality, being sensitive to the reality around us.

We aim to care for the elderly in our communities, as they are a treasure that we must carefully safeguard, serving as example of perseverance and generosity for the whole movement, especially for the youth.

God wants us to be more creative in **reaching out to the youth** with their own language, being bold, timely, and effective, using all possible means to reach their hearts, spreading the joy of the Gospel and showing God's mercy, especially to those who feel lonely, confused, unmotivated, so that they can recover the meaning of their lives.

We must take a step further in **interculturality**, in the rapprochement between peoples, to sensitize ourselves to accept and understand that our differences enrich us and lead us to the Universality of the heart.

The movement is a **shared responsibility** for all of us, and we aspire to greater generosity our financial contributions and our gifts, to respond more effectively to the needs of the communities, in order to mature and progress in the communion of goods.



CALLED TO LIVE AGAINST THE CURRENT AS LIVING WATER

According to our sourcebook, *"it is part of our secular vocation to live fully inserted in the world, that is to say, in the ordinary conditions of marriage, family and social life; to exercise, with the greatest possible competence, secular professions and to occupy ourselves in domestic, social, economic, political and cultural affairs"*.

Therefore, as a result of the Assembly's reflection, we dream...:

- **IN THE FAMILY:** The challenges that we face include caring for marriage, the merciful acceptance of new forms of family and educating our sons and daughters.
- **IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN:** We must accompany youth and present the Gospel to them in a way that they understand, acquiring the pedagogy of Jesus, in order to counteract the dehumanisation in this world, where individualism, relativism and selfishness prevail.
- **IN HEALTH CARE AND ILLNESS CARE:** We need to be compassionate communities that accompany the loneliness of the elderly and those with physical and/or mental health impairment.
- **IN POLITICS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, IN THE ECONOMY AND LABOUR RELATIONSHIPS:** We must be proactive in public engagement, supporting and promoting initiatives to respect human rights, protect the environment, care for the common home, and all the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), supporting and promoting all the actions already present in our communities.
- **IN THE DEFENCE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS:** The Movement needs people educated to work towards eliminating social inequalities, unjust laws, denouncing government corruption and promoting the defence of natural resources, the rights of peoples and the comprehensive reception and legal assistance to migrants.
- **IN CULTURE, ARTS, SCIENCES:** Culture is often manipulated, accentuating differences and sometimes ridiculing the other. As Lay Claretinas we must build bridges and use creativity and knowledge to reveal God, as many people seek Him. To do this, we must use the new languages and signs of the times.
- **IN MASS MEDIA:** It is a powerful tool that brings us closer to each other. Creating a comprehensive plan will strength internal communication and enrich the process of evangelization. Thus, training in this field becomes necessary.

We feel called to be part of this mighty river like tributaries that, wherever they pass, and however small they may be, we must care for and protect so that they bring forth abundant life and fruits.

Jesus said: *"I am the living water, and whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* (Jn 4:14).

Let us pray to God that we may continue to be streams of living water wherever we are, to transmit with joy and passion what we have experienced in this Assembly. Called to evangelise in the style of St. Anthony Mary Claret and united in the Heart of our Mother.