

Liturgy for Hungarian province incorporation into the MEP – JFL words

2 September 2017

I would like to begin by thanking God for the life of the Hungarian province since the foundation of its first house in 1770. During these centuries, much glory has been given to God through the life and service, especially in the field of the education of girls, of so many members of the CJ here in Hungary, both living and dead. None of that generosity of life and of service is or will be lost, now or in the future. Today, whilst taking a concrete step towards embracing the present and co-creating the future of the CJ here in Hungary, we also want to honour that past and give thanks for it to God. I would like to invite each of you to spend a moment or two remembering and bringing before God members of the province whom you have known and loved and who are now in heaven, and to whom we remain bound by the ties of affection, that affection that Mary Ward commended to us all on her deathbed.

St Paul speaks to us very powerfully in that passage of Romans which we have just heard, when he says that that, though many, we form one body – in our case the one body of the CJ, which Mary Ward sacrificed so much to bring to birth. Today we are making that belonging to one body real in a very concrete way. In the CNs we read very clearly, that “our fundamental community is the one body of the Congregatio” [CN 8.2a]. That is not always an easy reality to live out and today I want to acknowledge that fact – we cannot run away from it. However, I also want to acknowledge and celebrate the generosity that is here in this chapel this afternoon. This generosity is both that of the Hungarian members, who are, like Mary after the Annunciation, stepping into a new and different future as members of this whole body and the also generosity of the MEP which, like Elizabeth at the Visitation stands with open arms and an open heart, waiting to greet her cousin...

St Paul goes on to talk about the different gifts of the members – the gifts of prophecy, of service, of teaching, of encouraging and of giving. I want to focus in particular on the gift of encouragement. There are no circumstances whatsoever, whether of health, frailty, or anything else, that can take away from us the gift of encouraging one another. With Sister Sabine, I am about to mission three people in this room in a particular way for the co-creating of the future of the CJ here in Hungary – Sisters Veronica, Viktoria and Brigitta. Before that, however, I want to mission each one of you – I want to mission you to be an encourager, and in particular an encourager of your sisters. I invite you to **encourage** each other as you walk this new path; not to waste time or spiritual energy wishing things were different or complaining how things “aren’t what they used to be” because the fact is that things are **never** what they used to be. If they were we would cease to grow. I invite us all to be open to the fact that God is speaking to us in today’s reality just as he spoke to us in earlier realities. I invite us to find Him in all things, places, and persons and in this new reality, in keeping with our Ignatian tradition, but most of all to encourage each other to find Him in this new reality as you found him in

earlier ones. He is here and He will not let you or us down, any more than He did in the past.

St Paul says in the passage that if your mission is to lead, then “do it diligently”. Sisters Veronica, Viktória and Brigitta have all been invited to play a particular part in the mission of leadership here in Hungary as we move into the future. For Sister Brigitta it is in the area of the “cura personalis” of each member, for Sister Viktória in the area of the “cura apostolica” of the houses and works and for Sister Veronica in being the bridge between all of you and Sister Sabine and her council.

So, I invite Sisters Veronica, Brigitta and Viktória to come up together, signifying that theirs is a shared responsibility and receive their new missions from Sister Sabine and myself...

Veronica – we mission you to support the Hungarian members, to encourage them in their lives and their mission, to be the bridge between them and Sister Sabine and her council and, not least, to foster in them the love of Mary Ward and of “our way of proceeding”

Brigitta – we mission you to have care of your sisters in Hungary – the “cura pastoralis” – to serve them and to encourage them joyfully and affectionately yourself and in so doing to encourage them to be joyful and affectionate in their vocations

Viki – we mission you to have care of the houses and works here in Hungary – the “cura apostolica” - so that all that takes place in them always has as its goal “the greater glory of God and the good of souls”

We pray for each one of you that you will be given all the graces you need to fulfil your new responsibilities diligently, generously and cheerfully because we know that, as Mary Ward, said “Almighty God loves a cheerful giver”. Jesus say Amen.