



Prot. SG 236/2026

MESSAGE OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL ON THE FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY MARY CLARET 2026

*Seeing one another through the eyes of Christ:
Learning from Claret's love for his missionaries*

Dear brothers,

As we celebrate the feast of our Founder, I thank God for each of you: for your vocation, your generous service, and your daily offering in the life and mission of our Congregation.

A moving expression of Claret's heart appears in his letter to Fr. José Xifré of 20 August 1861. Reflecting on the missionaries and their dedication to making God known and loved, he was overcome with affection. He wished to serve them and even give his blood and his life for them. Tears interrupted his writing. The manuscript preserved in our Curia still bears a quiet witness to that love: ink blurred by his tears.

During my visits to our missionaries in many challenging peripheries, I have experienced something of what Claret expressed. Seeing our brothers close to people amid poverty, insecurity, and hardship, I have felt tears welling up in my eyes and love overflowing from my heart. Their presence and generous self-giving move me deeply. I return grateful to God and to you, with a renewed sense of the beauty of our vocation.

Let us ask for the grace to see one another with the eyes of Christ, as Claret learnt to do. Familiarity can obscure the gift of the brother beside us. We notice his limitations, take his generosity for granted, or overlook the burdens he carries. Yet each brother has a sacred history of being called and loved by God, and a response sustained through joys and struggles.

Do our brothers experience our appreciation for their vocation and service? Do we rejoice in the good they do? A word of gratitude, patient listening, or interest in another's ministry can renew their joy. The young missionary taking his first steps in mission, the confrere carrying heavy responsibilities, and the elderly or sick brother—each needs to discover in our gaze: *my life is precious to my brothers.*

Claret learnt this gaze from Christ, whose eyes reveal the Father's love. In communion with Jesus, he came to recognize others as beloved children of the Father, worthy of the gift of his life. His apostolic prayer expresses this source of his missionary spirit: "O my God and my Father, may I know you and make you known" (Aut. 233). Knowing, loving, serving and praising the Father overflow into the desire that everyone may share in that communion. **Claret's fraternal affection and missionary zeal spring from the same filial love.**

As we prepare for the XXVII General Chapter, we shall return together to this source through **a congregational journey into the heart of the Lord's Prayer.** With the sentiments of the Son, we shall deepen the filial and apostolic spirit that animated Claret, allowing the words *Our Father* to transform our relationships and renew our shared mission.

On this feast, let us bring before the Father the names and faces of our brothers, especially those whose goodness we find difficult to recognize. Let us give thanks for their call and pray: *Lord, teach me to see this brother with your eyes and love him with your heart.*

I wish each of you and every community a joyful and fruitful celebration of our Founder's feast. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary help us cherish God's gifts in one another, and may Claret's intercession keep us **one in mission, sharing the one Mission of the Lord.**

With fraternal affection and prayer.



Fr. Mathew Vattamattam, CMF
Superior General

Rome, October 24, 2026

