



## A living Charism, a shared Path 150 years of the Hijas de Jesús

# Jesus poor and humble

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I believe that our present moment is similar in some things to the initial moment of the Congregation: the small number of sisters, the limited scope of resources, the elementality of the structures, the insecurity regarding the future. We could approach Mother Candida and the first Hijas de Jesus to touch in some way what they lived and how they reacted. The experience of these companions of ours can enlighten us: their way of going to the essentials, their simplicity, their faith, their courage and, also, their humility and their limits <sup>1</sup>.

150th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation. Fruitful years that invite us to deepen on our identity, so as to live in the midst of the world as true Hijas de Jesus. This anniversary calls us to offer a new face of the charism <sup>2</sup>.

### A GRATEFUL GAZE How did Mother Candida live this specific trait?

*«It does not please me that you spend your time thinking that you are poor, that you would not be able to move forward; didn't I know that you didn't have the world's riches and goods?» <sup>3</sup>.*

It is impossible to think, to ask oneself this question, without recalling the beginnings of the foundation, a woman who dares to give a concrete response, without anything, sustained and abandoned, with total trust, in the Father, as one who truly knows that she is his instrument and that the work is not hers. *«The experience of knowing that we are loved unconditionally by God brings us to a vital stance of full and total trust in the Father. It calls us to deepen in the following of the poor and humble Jesus and to participate, in the measure that is possible, in the living condition of the poor. From there a new way of being and becoming in the world will be opened for us <sup>4</sup>».*

*The houses or schools of the Congregation, which I **want** to be founded in true evangelical poverty, may not acquire or possess revenues and goods as property more*

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Celia Amorós Pérez, *Las Hijas de Jesús el hoy y los orígenes*, p. 6

<sup>2</sup> Det. CGXVIII, nº, 1

<sup>3</sup> *Espiritualidad de la Madre Fundadora*, p. 193

<sup>4</sup> Det. CGXVIII, nº 13



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*than those necessary for the sustenance, relief and decent housing of the Sisters and students*<sup>5</sup>.

Today we are invited to the conversion of this desire, so explicit from Mother Candida, a desire that springs from her own life experience. *«The living of true evangelical poverty, according to the third paragraph of our Formula, is an integrating dimension that can qualify other aspects of our life wherein we also feel the need for conversion. It is a grace which we ask to be given, that will help us to form the new face of the Hija de Jesus that the world needs today»*<sup>6</sup>.

Always keep in mind the testimony of Mother Foundress and the exigency of the Constitutions and the tradition of the Congregation on this point. This requires: growing in the attitudes of detachment from what is ours and from our own selves; abnegation, dependence and sense of Body; simplicity, austerity, and gratuitousness; to allow ourselves to be helped and to join others in the common search<sup>7</sup>.

Our vocation as Hijas de Jesus is deepened as we daily grow in resembling Jesus more. It is our desire, as Mother Candida puts it in the Formula, to exert more effort in living “true evangelical poverty”. We want to commit ourselves to take courageous and concrete steps towards greater identification with him, with his way of living, from the Father’s perspective, in loving compassion of humanity. And that moves us to question the way we live our poverty and solidarity<sup>8</sup>.

Contemplate Mother Candida, dialogue with Mother Candida about your strong desire to be a true daughter, ask her to help you to live the essence of this vow, with freedom, detachment, authenticity, gladness, joy, solidarity and to welcome your own limitations ... AND BE THANKFUL FOR THE GIFT RECEIVED!

### A COMPASSIONATE AND CARING GAZE

*«Very, very much, she liked to use as model in the beautiful religious virtues the manger and the way and love with which Jesus practiced them»*<sup>9</sup>.

Let us contemplate the manger asking ourselves these questions: **how can I live today, according to the world context in which we are and according to the vocation to which I have been called?**

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<sup>5</sup> CFI, 2

<sup>6</sup> Det. CGXVIII, nº 11

<sup>7</sup> LVAf, nº, 44

<sup>8</sup> Det. CG XVII, nº, 11

<sup>9</sup> *Espiritualidad de la Madre Fundadora*, p. 193



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To desire to be placed under the banner of Christ, to live from the perspective of one's littleness and simplicity, in constant interior itinerancy and accepting its consequences in our life; to maintain the spiritual tension that helps us to be counter-cultural in a world that invites us to an easy life, to regain the evangelical gratuitousness, not allowing ourselves to be trapped by fears, consumerism and comfort <sup>10</sup>.

To grow in our social conscience in a globalized world characterized by materialism and technological advancements that attract us to what is most easy, pleasurable and efficient. To commit ourselves to justice, to the globalization of solidarity, sharing our life and resources with the most needy and the excluded. To care for the weakest who at times happen to be Sisters in our own community. To awaken in us the ecological sensitivity which leads us to a more reasonable and fraternal use of the goods of the earth <sup>11</sup>.

We want to rediscover and live in the ordinariness of everyday, the mystical and prophetic dimension of the vow of poverty, which invites us to stay beside our brothers who suffer whatever type of injustice and exclusion; that leads us to denounce injustices and strengthens our commitment for justice <sup>12</sup>.

We have looked at the world to which we are sent, a world whose ambivalent reality demands help and impels us to be a response to some of its strongest needs. We see that people, many times, walk without strength, without hope and we have been reminded that consecrated life is called to be balm, warmth, kind presence, impulse of hope, comfort along the way, encouragement, provoking question, expert in communion, life that reveals Jesus of Nazaret <sup>13</sup>.

Recovering the radicality of evangelical poverty is more than just a call. It is a necessity, an urgency, a charismatic healing in order to grow in the well-being of the Body and be a response to the cry of this world that is asking from us the best of ourselves <sup>14</sup>.

The living of true evangelical poverty is a process that requires discernment. The Holy Spirit will help us to be faithful to tradition, inspiring us with multiple novelties and helping us to glimpse into what kind of consecrated life we are journeying in today <sup>15</sup>.

We are on the way, and the strongest expression of verifying that in us, is in the desire to offer the world the new face of the charism today. We are going to travel paths together, as Pope Francis told us in his Homily for the opening of the Synod of Bishops:

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<sup>10</sup> LVAf, nº 37

<sup>11</sup> LVAf, nº 46

<sup>12</sup> Det. CGXVII, Nº, 14

<sup>13</sup> Det. CGXVII, nº, 4

<sup>14</sup> Det. CGXVII, nº, 7

<sup>15</sup> Det. CGXVII, nº,18



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Celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together. In three verbal dimensions: Encounter, Listen and Discern. As we initiate this process, we too are called **to become experts in the art of encounter**. True encounter arises only from listening. The meeting and mutual listening are not something that ends in itself, that leaves things as they are. On the contrary, when we enter into dialogue, we start the debate and the path, and in the end we are not the same as before, we have changed.

A rich man ran towards Jesus, while He was on the way (cf. Mk 10,17), Jesus senses that the person before him is a good and religious man, obedient to the commandments, but he wants to lead him beyond the mere observance of precepts. Through dialogue, he helps him to discern. Jesus encourages that man to look within, in the light of the love that the Lord himself had shown by his gaze (cf. Mk 10:21), and to discern in that light what his heart truly treasures. And in this way to discover that he cannot attain happiness by filling his life with more religious observances, but by emptying himself, selling whatever takes up space in his heart, in order to make room for God <sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Papa Francisco, Homilía Misa de apertura del Sínodo de los Obispos, 2021