



PONTIFICIUM CONSILIUM
DE NOVA EVANGELIZATIONE
PROMOVENDA

Praeses

To the Missionaries of Mercy
who have accepted to continue
in the Ministry entrusted to them on the occasion
of the Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy

From the Vatican, April 26, 2017

Prot. N. NE/532/2017/P

Dear Missionary of Mercy,

As you are aware, in the light of the spiritual fruits to which the work of the Missionaries of Mercy gave rise during the recent Extraordinary Holy Year, the Holy Father has decided that this sensitive ministry, an expression of Divine Mercy and the pastoral solicitude of the Church, is to continue until further notice “as a concrete sign that the grace of the Jubilee remains alive and effective the world over” (*Misericordia et Misera*, 9). For these reasons, in accord with your Ordinary and recognizing your wish to continue in this ministry, I am sending you, enclosed herewith, the Decree by which the Holy Father confirms you as a *Missionary of Mercy*.

As in the Jubilee Year, in this new phase of your service I would ask that you make yourself available to Pastors, Rectors of Sanctuaries, and Diocesan Bishops, ready to undertake missions to the people and initiatives related particularly to the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to preaching on the Mystery of Divine Mercy, above all in the periods of the liturgical year outwith Ordinary Time. You would do well to promote your own ministry by suggesting that such celebrations be organized.

You will be called upon to embody, in an exemplary fashion, those characteristics which the Holy Father suggests should be proper every confessor. Thus you should to strive to be *welcoming* to all, a *witnesses* of fatherly tenderness whatever the gravity of the sin involved, *attentive* in helping penitents to reflect on the wrong they have done, *clear* in presenting moral principles, *willing* to walk patiently alongside the faithful on their penitential journey, *far-sighted* in discerning individual cases and *generous* in dispensing God’s forgiveness, and *open-hearted* (cf. *Misericordia et Misera*, 10).

I would remind you that the faculties granted to you on the occasion of the Extraordinary Holy Year are still valid and are limited to the absolution of the following sins which involve a censure reserved to the Apostolic See:

1. **Profanation of the Eucharistic species** by taking them away or keeping them for a sacrilegious purpose.

2. **Use of physical force against the Roman Pontiff.**
3. **Absolution of an accomplice in a sin against the Sixth Commandment.**
4. **Direct violation of the Sacramental Seal by a confessor.**
5. **The recording by means of a technical device of what the priest or the penitent says in a Sacramental Confession** (whether real or simulated), or the divulgation of such a recording through the means of social communication. (cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Decretum de sacramenti Paenitentiae dignitate tuenda*, 23 September 1988 (AAS 80 [1988] 1367).

I would also like to remind you that the Ministry of the Missionary of Mercy is **limited exclusively to the internal forum. Thus a Missionary is not competent to enter into questions or measures which are the competence of the external forum.**

Regarding the **remission of censures**, it is sufficient that the Missionary use the regular formula of absolution, which remains unchanged, with the intention of absolving from the censure. However, **if it would bring greater peace to the penitent**, the Missionary may, **before** pronouncing the regular formula of absolution, absolve the penitent from the censure by pronouncing the specific formula proposed in *Appendix I* of the *Ritus Poenitentiae*. (In this regard, it is advisable to consult the version of the *Rite of Penance* used in your territory).

Regarding the **penance**, I would strongly recommend that it be such as to truly assist the full conversion of the penitent.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share with you that the Holy Father desires to meet with all of the Missionaries of Mercy, here in Rome, on the the Second Sunday of Easter (also known as “Divine Mercy Sunday”) **of 2018**. This occasion, concerning which you will receive further details in the future, will provide an opportunity for formation and the sharing of experiences. Your presence is thus required in Rome from **April 8 to April 11, 2018**.

Finally, I would like to remind you that all communications pertaining to the Ministry of the Missionaries of Mercy are to be sent exclusively via email to the following address: (*missionariesofmercy@pcpne.va*).

I would like to thank you once again for the service that you have already rendered to the Church during the *Jubilee of Mercy* and for your willingness to continue in this mission. I wish you a fruitful ministry and every blessing, as I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ 
✠ Rino Fisichella

Enclosure 1

