



# International Community of the Divine Savior

## General Committee

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*Speech of the ICDS President Christian Patzl on the occasion of the award of the Decree of Recognition by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life on Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023.*

### **We have reached the goal.**

- No, we have only reached an important point on our journey.

About 150 years ago, now Blessed Francis of the Cross Jordan had a vision. He wanted to create an ecclesial work in which priests, religious and lay people would work together as equals to bring the Good News to the people. He recognized the importance of the pulpit in the world to reach people. This dream, perhaps naive, could not be realized for various reasons. Thus, the development of the Salvatorian tree with its branches was different.

Today we have realized a little more of this dream. The laity, dedicated to the Salvatorian charism and spirituality, has become an organization recognized by the Church. That it would not be an easy path was already clear to us when we started the process in 2003. But through the procedure of clarification about what we dreamed, what is necessary, and what we can get in real, we have learned a lot.

So I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has accompanied us on this path. Especially the involved of the dicastery: Your Eminence Cardinal Farrell as prefect, Fr. Giovanni Bonaventura, and Dr. Milligan who have supported us to find the right content and wording for the statutes.

The members of the Generalates of the Salvatorian religious branches, Sr. Maria-Yaneth and Fr. Milton as present superiors, and also all other members of the Generalates in the past for their support, patience and believe in us. And let us not forget all the members of the Salvatorian Family who supported us with their enthusiasm, thoughts, faith and prayers. Each one of you, whether present here or far away on the other side of the world, has contributed a part to the success, and for this we thank and bow.

This Decree of Recognition of the Dicastery is now a basis and mandate for us to clean up and bring together the structures that are currently still partly different in some units. At the same time, we now want to promote the awareness of belonging to a unified worldwide organization, our own vocation as Lay Salvatorians, and community formation.

We take this decree with great joy and humility. The image of Lay Salvatorians is as diverse as the image of the people on our planet. As Lay Salvatorians, we are on the front lines of proclamation

and must face some unexpected challenges. This should be done in all ways and by all means that God's love inspires. In doing so, we must discern the signs of the times and respond to their questions. The words of Blessed Francis Jordan, "As long as there is only one person on earth who does not know God and does not love Him above all things, you must not allow yourself a moment's rest," must be seen in a much broader context today. We must not rest as long as there are people who are starving, plagued by disease and hardship, displaced and now homeless, exploited, and trapped in one of the many forms of modern slavery. Likewise, there are people who do not have access to education, clean air, and drinking water, or at least minimal social medical care. I don't even want to start with the other needs such as hunger, fair work, and wages, or future prospects. Those who attentively follow the news know where the hardships in the world are at home. In this context, protecting our environment and combating greed and exploitation is essential if we are to follow the words of the Salvatorian Charter to protect life in all its fullness.

Our tool is Salvatorian universality, to recognize the needs of the places where we are, and to give to people and the creation the help that makes God's love tangible. We are able to change the world step by step and the often small steps necessary for this can be taken by each one of us. Our Lay Salvatorian commitment invites us to consider our talents, and meet daily challenges in a creative way. And facing our current times the opportunities to get involved, especially in places where "people of the Catholic Church" have not been expected before, are diverse and many. May we always be able to follow our vocation with joy and humility. So that all may know Him, the only true God, and the one He has sent, Jesus Christ.