

## **"Communion, Creativity, and Tenacity"**

### **The Pope delivers these three keywords to the National Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) gathered in Rome for the Annual General Assembly.**

*"Communion, creativity, and tenacity.* Let us consider these essential words, which are relevant for the Church in its permanent state of mission, and especially for our Missionary Societies called to renewal in order to be ever more effective in service."

With these words, Pope Francis addressed about 120 National Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) on Saturday, 25 May, during the traditional audience for the Annual General Assembly. Many National Directors made the special trip to Rome to attend the Assembly at the "Fraterna Domus" spirituality centre in Sacrofano.

Fr Brian Lucas, Catholic Mission National Director of Australia, was among the National Directors who travelled to Rome to attend the Pope's audience.

"As always, the Pope's words were full of encouragement and a reminder that the work of mission belongs to the whole Church," said Fr Brian Lucas.

In his opening speech, the President of the PMS, Archbishop Emilio Nappa, highlighted: "The 'epochal change' underway in the world also challenges the nature and specific mission of the Pontifical Mission Societies, called to carefully read what is happening in society to set out once again to meet the deep needs of today's men and women."

In his address to the National Directors of the PMS, Pope Francis discussed the Holy Trinity's celebration from the previous day. He interpreted three key words in a missionary context, beginning with "*communion*": "When we contemplate the Trinity, we see that God is a communion of persons, a mystery of love. The love with which God comes to seek and save us, rooted in his being One and Triune, is also the basis of the missionary nature of the pilgrim Church on earth (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, 1; *Ad Gentes*, 2)."

He then encouraged everyone to "grow in this spirituality of missionary communion, which is the foundation of the Church's current synodal journey. I emphasised this in the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* and I reiterate it now, especially as you work on renewing your Statutes. Since a journey of missionary conversion is necessary for everyone, it is essential that opportunities for personal and communal formation be provided in order to grow in the dimension of "communal" missionary spirituality."

The "*creativity*" – the second word "delivered" by Pope Francis to the National Directors of the PMS – arises from being "rooted in God's creative work, which makes all things new." The Pope emphasised: "missionary activity is creative to the extent that Christ's charity is its origin, form, and end. Thus, with inexhaustible imagination, such charity inspires new ways of evangelising and serving others, especially the poorest."

"*Tenacity*", the third word entrusted by Pope Francis to the reflection of the PMS Assembly: "Let us also contemplate this characteristic of the love of the Triune God who, in order to fulfil his plan of salvation, with

constant faithfulness has sent his servants throughout history and, in the fullness of time, gave himself in Christ Jesus. The divine mission 'is a tireless going out to all men and women, in order to invite them to encounter God and enter into communion with him. Tireless! The Church, for her part, in fidelity to the mission she has received from the Lord, will continue to go to the ends of the earth, to set out over and over again, without ever growing weary or losing heart in the face of difficulties and obstacles'" (Message for World Mission Day 2024).

The Annual General Assembly is a central event during the year, and this edition will focus on the renewal of the PMS Statutes. The Assembly's work will continue until 31 May.

ENDS

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**About Catholic Mission**

Catholic Mission is the Australian agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies – the Catholic Church's global organisation dedicated to continuing Jesus Christ's mission in the world: that all may have life to the full. Catholic Mission contributes funding and project support to critical church-run initiatives in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America. These include spiritual formation, pastoral care, education, health, sanitation, and agricultural programs. Here in Australia, we form people to go out and be missionary in their professional and personal lives; to pray, advocate and act for those on the margins. Catholic Mission has offices in 27 Australian dioceses.