



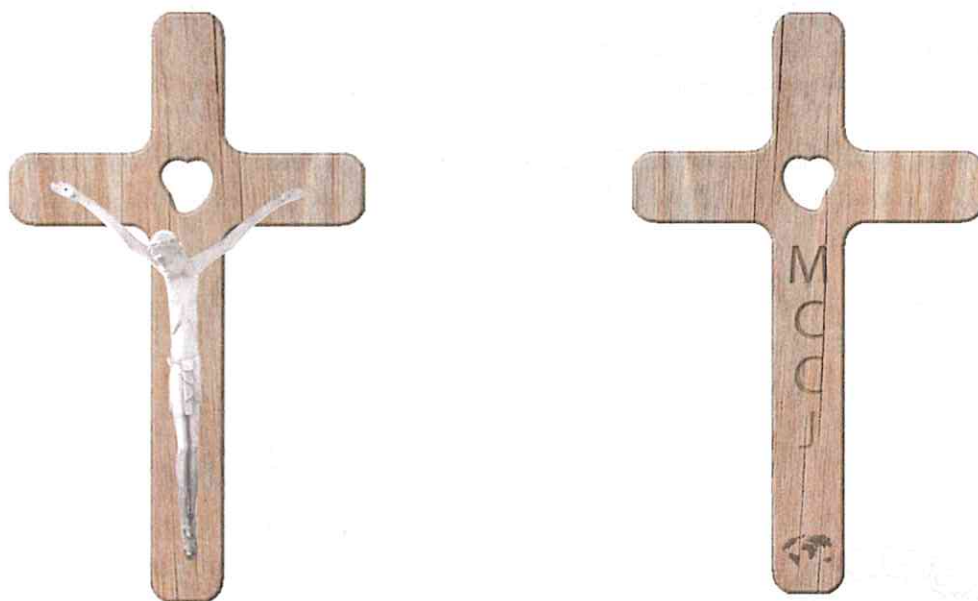
Rome, 14 September 2020  
Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

*God wanted all things to be reconciled  
through him and for him  
everything in heaven  
and everything on earth,  
when he made peace  
by his death on the Cross (Col 1, 20)*

My dear confreres,

May the peace and hope of the risen Lord fill your hearts.

We are writing to let you know that we have, at last, chosen an official cross for our Institute. Many confreres had already expressed their wish to have a special cross for the members of the Institute. During our six-year period of office, various proposals were put forward; the latest was made during the Assembly of Circumscription Superiors in February 2020. We have since reworked various ideas and reached a definitive plan.



The cross, made of olive wood, 6cm. long and with a metal figure of Christ, shows the following elements:

- **An African Christ** which refers to the missionary passion of Comboni for the peoples of Africa for whom he gave his life. His unconditional love for that continent finds its origin

and model in the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for all Humanity, opening his arms wide on the cross.

- **A heart:** where the vertical and horizontal arms join, representing the divine and human dimensions, there is a pierced heart. It represents our consecration as Comboni Missionaries which is also our hearts joined to the Heart of Christ that beats for all humanity.
- **Wood of the olive tree** which reminds us of the Garden of Olives and also Limone sul Garda, from where our Founder came. It is a simple and noble material that allows us to see the grain that gives each cross its unique identity. For Comboni, the cross is a theological category connected to the unfolding of missionary action: “the works of God are born and grow at the foot of the cross”.
- **MCCJ:** on the back of the cross are inscribed the initials of our Institute’s name, a symbol of our desire to be bound to Christ crucified and risen. It is the name by which we are known in the Church and that which unites us to all the Comboni Missionaries scattered throughout the world (cf. Letter on the new name of the Congregation, 1979).
- **World outline:** on the back, at the bottom of the cross is a profile of the world. The mission becomes concrete in the peoples and cultures where we live the Gospel in the hope that the Kingdom may flourish in signs of justice, peace, reconciliation and care for our common home – life in its fullness.

Bearing in mind that this is part of the identity of the Institute, we ask that the following rules be respected:

- The cross is a sign of the identity of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, exclusively for members of the Institute,
- The cross may not be given or distributed to non-members of the Institute.
- Comboni Missionaries are free to wear it.
- The cross is to be presented to the novices at their first profession.

On 14 September 2020, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, decrees this to be the official cross of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus.

Saint Daniel Comboni lived the mystery of the cross with deep faith in the salvific action of Jesus; we ask him to intercede for each one of us in our evangelising mission.



*Angoban Tesfaye*

On behalf of the General Council  
Fr. Tesfaye Tadesse Gebresilasie, mccj  
Father General