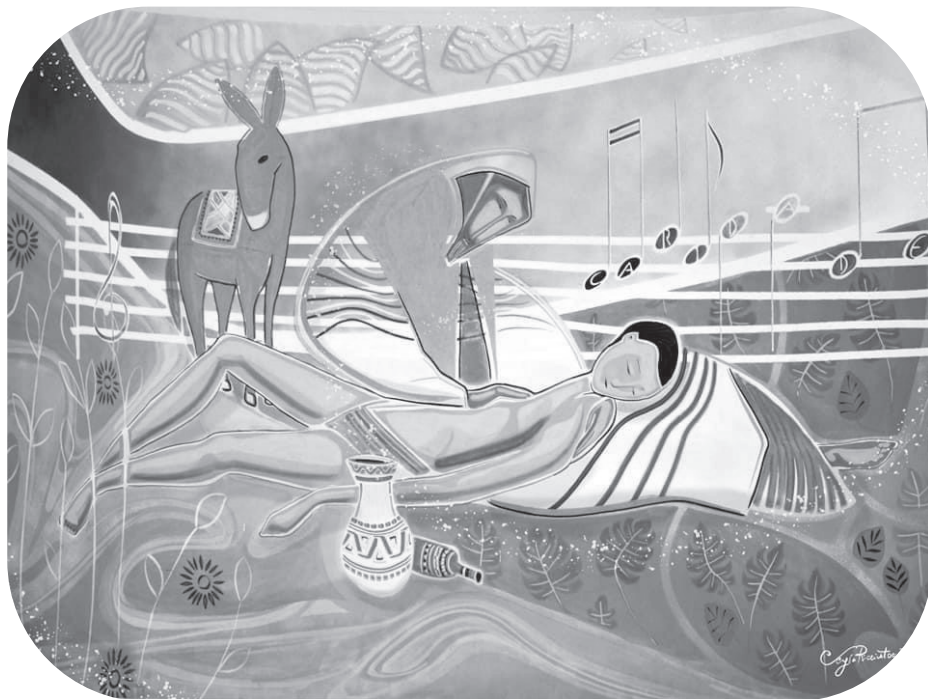


We are mission

SOCIAL MINISTRY AS DIMENSION OF EVANGELIZATION
IN COMBONI FAMILY



SUMMARY REPORT

*"The rich and the poor, the healthy
and the sick, the young and the old,
the master and the servant will al-
ways have equal access to my heart.
I make common cause with each of
you, and the happiest of my days
will be the one in which I can give
my life for you."!*

Saint Daniel Comboni
Homily of Khartoum



FOREWORD:

A JOURNEY COMING FROM AFAR



The social dimension of life has always been an identifying characteristic of the Church and is a foundational part of Evangelization. As Pope Francis reminds us, “...if this dimension is not duly made explicit, there is always the risk of disfiguring the authentic and integral meaning of the evangelizing mission.” (EG no. 176)

Social Ministry is primarily expressed in the following services:

- **CHARITY** and the caring for the impoverished and the marginalized;
- **CONVOCATION** of all ecclesial, social, political, economic and cultural forces interacting around a project that promotes life in abundance, as well as the dignity of every person, for the realization of a different world: supportive, inclusive and fraternal;
- **PROCLAMATION** of the Values of the Kingdom of God;
- **DENUNCIATION** of injustices for a culture of peace, justice and safeguarding of creation (JPIC).

During the past 30 years, following the Orientations of the Second Vatican Council, the Social Doctrine of the Church (SDC) and the

reading of the signs of the times, the Comboni Family – together with many other movements and associations – has taken at heart **the service of Convocation for advocacy**. This was carried out without neglecting Charity – which remains the predominant service – nor the Proclamation of the Values of the Kingdom, nor the Denunciation of the injustices and of the waste-culture that humiliate the life of billions of people. The latter of these, however, is still somehow weak and reticent in the ranks of our awareness and praxis.

Numerous initiatives and activities promoted in recent years demonstrate this pattern. First of all, the founding of the *Institute of Social Ministry in Mission* in Nairobi in 1994, which took place at

the same time of the Special Assembly of Bishops for Africa; but also the appointment of the general coordinator of JPIC, the late Fr. Anton Mayer, on the occasion of the Jubilee of 2000. The same can be stated regarding various initiatives in our individual Institutes. For example, the event of *the Symposium on the Regeneration of Africa and the Rules of 1871*, organized by the Comboni Sisters in Verona, in 2013.

There have also been further ways of widening the circle of our participation in the various paths aimed at creating unity of intent among various ecclesial entities. Some of these are: the adherence to inter-congregational organiza-

tions such as: *Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN)* and *VIVAT International*; the birth of groups focused on reflection and pastoral dimensions, such as: *Missionary Reflections in English speaking Africa*, and the *European Group for Theological Reflection (GERT)*.

In these same years, a number of specific pastoral ministries have been organized on a continental, and, at times, intercontinental level. For instance: the pastoral groups in favor of Human Rights; the pastoral care of the landless and homeless, with prophetic acts even to the point of martyrdom, such as that of Fr. Ezekiel Ramin. Furthermore, we organ-



ized pastoral work that promoted Interreligious Dialogue, especially with Islam; pastoral work among nomadic peoples and on the outskirts of large cities; pastoral work among Indigenous Peoples, Minority groups and Afro-descendant People, with the presence and sharing of life and vision, as experienced by Fr. Ettore Frisotti. Also, the fight against human trafficking, with the commitment of many of our Comboni Sisters (*Talitha Kum*) and the pastoral care of Migrant People; the defense of our Common Home against extractive companies; the commitment to change lifestyles and the promotion of ecological conversion.

The participation in the **World Social Forums**, which was realized hand in hand with so many Popular Movements – committed like us to the building of an alternative-solidarity-based world: (Nairobi - 2007; Belèm - 2009; Dakar - 2011; Rio de Janeiro - 2012, on the issue of water; Tunis - 2013 and 2015; Montréal - 2016; Salvador de Bahia - 2018) – has been the red thread allowing our Comboni Family to keep alive the attention towards the social movements. These, from the grassroots,

elaborate an alternative project to the liberal system, which oppresses and excludes billions of impoverished people. In addition, we have interacted with local and continental associations to start processes and concrete initiatives of change, so that the God's kingdom may become visible among the people.

This entire journey has been documented in the book **“Be the change you wish to see in the world”** (Comboni Family, Comboni Network, 2018). In a more specific manner, our commitment as Comboni Family has acquired officiality and a programmatic perspective with the decision of our General Administrations to appoint, in June 2019, a specific Commission whose members were: Fr. Daniele Moschetti, Sr. Hélène Israël Soloumta Kamkôl, Mr. Marco Piccione, Sr. Maria Teresa Ratti, Fr. Fernando Zolli.

The team was asked to oversee the reliability of some objectives and the realization of some tasks:

Objectives:

- *To map all the social ministerial activities of the Comboni Family*



- *To elaborate criteria, methods and common principles in the existing experiences of collaboration by framing them in an institutional perspective.*
- *To evaluate how the various ministries have a socially transforming impact on reality and how our ministerial presence responds to the needs underlined by the signs of the times.*

Tasks:

- *To publish the second volume, “Be the Change You Want to See in the World”, which describes what already exists in the field of collaborative ministry and recounts some life experiences. This publication could be a training tool for the 2020 Comboni Forum.*
- *To organize the participation in the 2020 World Social Forum, along with the event of the Comboni Family Forum, which could last 5 days.*

At the end of an almost three-year-long challenging, exciting and fruitful journey, the Commission is happy to present this report to the General Administrations of the Comboni Family. We also do this on behalf of the various collaborators called upon by the Commission itself: Fr. Domenico Guarino, Bro. Alberto Parise, Fr. Joseph Mumbere Musaga,

Fr. Fernando González Galarza, Fr. Arlindo Ferreira Pinto, Teresa Zenere. Attached to this synthesis, please find the minutes of more than 30 meetings the Commission carried out from 2018 to 2021. We encourage to visit the official websites of the Comboni Family and to familiarize with the abundant documentation of the journey carried out in its diversified modalities.

At this point, a special mention concerns the presence and contribution throughout our journey of Sr. Ida Colombo and of Bro. Alberto Lamana. We have truly appreciated their dedication and we hope that they will continue to serve as spokespersons in their respective General Councils.

The purpose of this Synthesis is to present some of the results achieved along the way, share some of the knots that need to be untangled, and propose several

recommendations we think will be useful in giving continuity to this process in the future.

We are all aware that the Covid19 pandemic has not allowed us to accomplish to the letter what had been requested of us. At the same time, we recognize that this emergency has pushed us to search and discover new ways in order to keep alive the initial vision. By so doing, a broader participation of confreres, sisters, consecrated seculars and laity has made its way on our journey. We have also witnessed a growing in communion among us as one family. We saw the fire of mission grow warmer among us, where people excluded and marginalized in our interconnected world, become the true protagonists of transformation.



1. OBJECTIVES



a. Mapping

The initiative of the Mapping exercise has offered us an enormous opportunity to deepen the quality of our ministerial presence within the lived experience of the diversified contexts in which we live.

The mapping exercise had three objectives:

- I. Evaluate the significance of social ministry within our Comboni Family and how our ministerial presence responds to the signs of the times and how much it is part of the processes of social transformation inspired by the Spirit.
- II. Bring out how we live/implement ministry in this changing era: this aspect concerns motivations, spirituality, ministerial style, missionary approach and the emergence of new models of mission that seem to be working where the more traditional models are no longer marking time.

- III. Promote a synodal journey of the Comboni Family, together with people victims of marginalization. This, in practice means, to identify paths of communion for a shared journey.

In the light of the journey accomplished, we have become more aware of the great opportunity offered us to have an overview on the social ministries of the Comboni Family based on systematic data. Though at present it remains a partial overview, since not all ministries have been tabulated. Through the Mapping we see possible a multidimensional comparison and dialogue that is unprecedented in our Comboni history.

Furthermore, in these three years, we have seen that Mapping presents itself as a further opportunity to walk together, with a synodal style in the sign of our Charism.

We realize that, although we have documented 205 ministerial experiences, we are at the beginning of a process which, in order to remain significant, must

be kept constant and increasingly focused in the future. We need to focus on how we will proceed in the future to keep data collection up to date.

We refer the readers of this Synthesis to familiarize with the information documented during the 2nd webinar. Through that information, the major coordinates that emerged from the Mapping are given. For instance: the four general axes of data reading, the various sectors of ministry, our style of collaboration, the most frequent activities carried out, and some of the links with other social ministry entities, the trends and some areas of possible growth, etc.

We see the need for the establishment of a committee, to guarantee the methodological and scientific validity of the collection and reading of data. Furthermore, we see an urgent need to broaden the base of collaborators with whom the coordinating teams of the Comboni Family can maintain contact for any need/clarification related to the information received.

At the local level: Community, Province/Circumscription..., a tool/mechanism should be provided that takes into account the need for the collection of new data and the updating of existing data, on an ongoing basis (every six months? annually?). In this way, the gather-



ing of information remains valid, up-to-date and meaningful.

Some voices were not registered in this first round of data collection, but for the future we hope that participation will be full and from all sectors. We see it as very important that all Provinces/Circumscriptions/Delegations/Groups... participate in the Mapping exercise, actively collaborat-

ization of various resources to an expanded capacity to listen to one another. From the animation and ongoing formation on social ministries and on our very journey as Comboni Family, to the keeping of practices focused on networking. All of this must be accomplished as Comboni Family.

As members of this Commission, we hope that the necessary steps



ing and fully engaging the Provincial Superiors, their councils and the heads of the various secretariats/offices.

The benefits we harvest in keeping the Mapping updated are innumerable: from the accompaniment of specific ministries to in-depth study of significant experiences. From the interaction among ministries for the optimi-

be taken to ensure a future to the Mapping initiative. This whole experience vibrates with Comboni and Ecclesial vitality.

b) Collaboration






The work of the Commission, but especially the contribution of the participants at the various levels of the different initiatives: the Mapping, the publication of the 2nd volume titled *"We are Mis-*

sion” and the direct participation in the three webinars, have confirmed that collaboration is an important part of ministeriality, thus most essential for the effectiveness of Mission.

Collaboration is best practiced in journeying together, while making it a style of life and of presence. It is necessary to start from the grassroot levels and from local communities, remaining open to new forms of collaboration, not only within the Comboni Family. We do so in order to learn from each other and be enriched in the complementarity of life experiences, the various methodological approaches and the many skills acquired.

Analyzing the various experiences described in the data collection, there emerge a great desire and willingness to collaborate, even if the concrete experiences documented are few. For this very reason, it is necessary to give guidelines focused on facilitating the process.

We now underline some proposals gathered during the various exchanges in our journey:

-  **Promote meetings of formation and information on programs and specific pastoral ministries, at the local and provincial level; meetings via zoom could help a lot.**
-  **Have the courage to take on and plan together a commitment to some specific social ministries, for example, that of spirituality and ecological conversion, the pastoral care for migrants, care of persons and youth ministry.**
-  **Enable our cenacles of apostles to be apostolic communities, with the presence of members from the different branches of the Comboni Family.**
-  **Promote mini chapters at continental level, to define social ministries and priorities to be carried out and shared together as Comboni Family.**
-  **Promote the initiation to Social Ministry and JPIC from the earliest stages of basic and ongoing formation, using the material gathered in this process. These are dimensions which are transversal to all as-**



pects of our missionary life.

c) Impact on social transformation

It has been argued that the impact is not a quantifiable variable, since commitment to Social Ministry adopts spiritual and theological criteria of evaluation and not those of efficiency and worldliness.

Though aware that the dimension of quality is quite significant – since it highlights the spirit with which we carry out our services – the idea of a quantitative eval-

uation (where, to what extent, how) should not be considered negative, since the concreteness of the urgencies in which people live require a managerial capacity that has nothing to do with worldliness. On the contrary, it should denounce worldliness where it is present, even in our own communities.

Given that at this stage of the process the quantitative and statistical incidence has not been taken into consideration, as just mentioned, **a further investigation could be useful in order to know where, to what extent and**

in what ways this impact on the transformation of social reality occurs.

The work accomplished has brought out a significant picture about the beauty and vivacity of the Comboni charism, as it is lived out worldwide, in a creative and intense way, particularly where impoverished people see themselves as protagonists and become aware of their own strengths for change and transformation of the system to occur.

A very positive result is marked when people see themselves at the center of their own history; then concrete initiatives are launched to solve daily existential problems, through cooperatives and cultural associations, and even through campaigns to raise awareness and consciousness.

It was not possible to find out to which degree we articulate with popular movements, the real subjects of change. We must allow ourselves to be more evangelized by the vitality that undergirds the lives of these movements, and believe that it is fundamental to create synergy with them.

It was also not possible to gather an exhaustive picture of our response to the signs of the times. There is, though, an awareness of the urgency and need for growth in some specific areas, such as: ecological conversion, prophetic denunciation of injustice, the promotion of an economy of communion, sustained by the process initiated through the Economy of Francis. All these factors offer an alternative to a predatory capitalist economy of the common goods.

Even the area of Education, which is very dear to Pope Francis, requires of us a more adequate reflection and interpretation.

Though some remarkable steps have been made, we are convinced that the process is still at the initial stage. Somehow, a door has opened before us through which we have experienced the beginning of a passage. As several have pointed out: it would be frustrating to slow down or halt this journey.

2. TASK

a) Publication of the 2nd volume

Published in 2020 with the title: ***“We are Mission: Witnesses to Social Ministry within the Comboni Family”***, this effort has had an excellent outcome. The text was published in four languages (English, Spanish, French, and Italian) so to make the information accessible to all; it is also available in PDF format. Those who have already read it – and they are many – have shown a great appreciation, as it has helped them to become aware of how much richness there is in the social ministry of the Comboni world. This text was a precious fruit of the collaboration among all branches of the Comboni Family.

SEDOS (*Service of Documentation and Studies on Global Mission*) also saw the significance to

have the volume as a reference point for their October 2021 *Mission Symposium*. During this event – held online and with a large participation of representatives of international missionary congregations and academic institutes engaged in missiology – the cover of the book was seen by all, and the indications for reading it digitally were shared with the participants.

The Executive Director of SEDOS kindly asked that an article be provided for the volume *“New Trends in Mission. The Emerging Future”* which Orbis Books will publish in June 2022.

Three of our Sisters (Ida Colombo, Hélène Israël Soloumta Kamkôl and Maria Teresa Ratti) authored the article, titled: *We are Mission - The beauty of witnessing together*. Since the Sisters had also prepared



a version in Italian of the same article, it was published in the SEDOS Bulletin of October-November 2021. The title in Italian is: “Noi siamo Missione.”

This article, along the volume “*Noi Siamo Missione*”, will contribute to make known the journey we have shared. The attention they both received from SEDOS is a sign of appreciation, and of possible inspiration for other missionary families to follow.

The distribution of this book has not been as speedy as desirable due to the pandemic. We believe it is important to make it available to the communities and to young people in Formation Houses. The Commission accompanied the publication of the book with a presentation in various languages – published in our magazines – and with videos in various languages.

It would be desirable to create a series (such as the Quaderni di Limone) and to give space to those who contribute to accompanying and nurturing this journey in Social Ministry. The contextualization of the Charism calls for greater attention, so that we can keep pace with the integral evolution of the Mission in all its aspects.

For future publications, the Commission considers it important that texts and studies be published in the original language, attaching to them abstracts in other languages.

It would also be desirable to have some PhD students use the material available to analyze the biblical, theological and spiritual motivations that support Social Ministry, and its impact on the transformation of reality.

All the available research and information could be a useful tool for missionary animation, besides



contributing at making known this particular and unique beauty of our Comboni Family.

b) Organization of the Comboni Forum

The impossibility to meet, forced on us with the Covid-19 pandemic, could have induced us to some forms of giving up, even as an excuse to stall and do something smaller. Instead, the choice of organizing three webinars provided wings to the feet of many of us.

These webinars were envisioned with great attention; they also allowed for a profound involvement of the participants, who had the

possibility of sharing and of discovering the beauty of our Charism and a deep sense of Family. For some participants it was the first time they met members of other branches of the Comboni Family.

The experience of the **three webinars** was recounted in three booklets, and was published on the Comboni Family websites. The most significant and promising result is that of having lived and witnessed the possibility of taking up this “cross” as a path of hope and rebirth, thanks to the strength of the Spirit.

The possibility/necessity of gath-



ering via zoom has made possible the realization of this task **at a limited economic expenditure**. However, for the future, it is necessary **to balance meetings in remote mode and those in presence**. In fact, for formation on specific topics and for general information the online manner can help a lot, but for programmatic choices it is necessary to provide meetings in presence at provincial and continental levels.

c) Participation in the World Social Forum (WSF)

The World Social Forum, foreseen to take place in Mexico at the beginning of 2020, was not held due to the Pandemic. At the same time, the challenge remains open: it is important for the whole Comboni Family **to encourage the presence and active participation in these events**, both at the world level, and often at the continental level. This is important, in order to continue to listen to the popular movements, which from the grassroots build an alternative world to the predominant system. The participation to the WSF also help us broaden the horizons and network with all the people who are

waiting for *“the new heavens and the new earth”* (2Pt 3, 13).

It is necessary to take at heart the encounters with the Popular Movements, occasions during which Pope Francis brings his own contribution as Pastor, and the prophetic proposal of the Gospel, supporting all the workers and poor of the earth to realize the project of the three “T’s” (*Techo, Tierra, Trabajo*).

During the fourth of these meetings – which took place online in October 2021 – in addition to the usual encouragement to move forward in the chosen priorities, Pope Francis made a surprising request for a systemic change *“in the name of God!”* He addressed the financial companies, the extractive companies, the food companies and those that manage the food distribution, the manufacturers and traffickers of arms, the giants of technology and telecommunications... asking for a culture of inclusion and for universal fraternity-sorority.

We need to give attention to each dimension involving an ecology conversion. The *Laudato Si Action Platform*, proposed by the Dicast-

ery of Integral Human Development and by the unconditional pastoral support of Pope Francis, with a scheduled program up to 2030, must see the entire Comboni Family committed at every level: local, continental and global. On this regard, it would be great if as Comboni Family, we could plan initiatives and commitments aimed at facilitating lifestyles that reflect our common identity.

In this same area, it would be good to encourage involvement and promote concrete initiatives alongside continental organizations, such as **REPAM** (*Red Eclesial Pan Amazzonica*) in Latin American countries, and **REBAC** (*Ecclesial Network of the Congo Basin Forest*) in Central Africa, to

give our own contribution to safeguarding the common home.

The recent events, gathering together the major leaders of nations and governments – Rome-Glasgow 2021 –, as well as the many demonstrations, in various world squares, of young people committed to creating awareness, in order to generate a difference that ensures a future of life for the generations coming after us, must find us attentive and open to collaborate. Both at the level of communities and provinces/delegations, and that of the general administrations and secretariats.



3. MISSIONARY DISCIPLES WITH SPIRIT



The presence of the Spirit has been felt in the variety and diversity of experiences, recounted and documented, carried out in unity of purpose and inspiration. Many of the activities respond to the invitation to be a Church that is outgoing, and ready to receive from the other, the poor and the excluded. A Church that challenges to conversion – even with the prophetic force of authentic witnessing – those who perpetrate unjust systems and so change their lives.

Some participants have emphasized the importance of the “*beyond*”, the external reality that challenges us; a reality that prompts us to question ourselves in order to live a spirituality that is truly incarnated in life. The social complexity surrounding the life of the people among whom we live demands of us an ability not only to seize the challenges, but also the willingness to take them as a possibility of transformation for us.

The gift of ourselves sets a person free, and leads to the contemplation of the presence of God, who

works wonders in the lives of impoverished people and of those who are systematically excluded and live at the margins. Starting from the many margins present in contemporary life, the **Spirit leads us to make courageous and prophetic choices**, entering with respect into the life and culture of the other, with a spirit open to dialogue, to sharing life marked with an altruistic and merciful lifestyle.

A strong point for living out Social Ministry with significance stands on the awareness that the Comboni charism makes protagonists of their own future the poor, the people at large, and the most marginalized social categories.

As Comboni women and men, called to live with and among the poor; with those who suffer the arrogance of the financial and extractive companies; of the chain production and distribution of food; of the technological, scientific and media development, etc., we ought to listen, and grasp their expectations. Furthermore, through discernment made in

the Spirit, we must promote with them processes of change, within their very uncertain contexts, often marked by violence, abuse and insecurity. **Certainly, it is not enough to live with and among the impoverished people. Our lifestyles must be prophetic expressions, and the necessary confirmation of what we believe in the depths of our being.**

The Spirit of communion and a synodal lifestyle help overcome differences, and they lead us on the journey, so to live a process that belongs to everyone and to all, and not only to a few special-

ists.

Synodality calls us to conversion and it is good for us to feel part of this great Synod that is now taking its first steps in the various ecclesial communities.

The gift of the Spirit we are receiving is precisely that of starting to see ourselves as a family. A family committed to carry on together, and truly minister as one family. A family that walks in keeping with our time, and with the fast changes that are happening everywhere we live.



4. THE COMMISSION



The appointment of a Commission, by the Comboni Family General Administrations, gave official status and programmatic clarity so to highlight Social Ministry as a dimension of evangelization.

From its inception, the Commission, built on a synodal spirit, saw the importance of inviting some external collaborators who are already engaged in this process. Although the MCCJ outnumbered the rest, the Commission truly rejoiced when a representative of the Comboni Secular Missionaries joined in along the way. For most of the time, the meetings had to be on a remote mode. Yet, they turned out to be a real laboratory, and, in a certain sense, a paradigmatic experience for collaboration. An experience to be implemented at all levels in the Comboni Family.

The indication of precise objectives and tasks facilitated the carrying out of an effective work, where the sensitivities, the approaches, the competences of each one intertwined and were mutually valued for the good of the Comboni mission in the Church and in the Society.

Our experience has also taught us that in addition to clarity of objectives and tasks, it is necessary to distinguish roles and approaches, which are distinct but complementary and necessary: those of the General Administrations, those of the Commission, those of the General Secretariats of the Comboni Family, as well as those of experts, collaborators and external technicians.

We believe that, in order to give continuity to the process, it is extremely important to enlarge the Commission, drawing beyond the Comboni Family. In this regard, we need to keep in mind the importance of always giving precise objectives and tasks.

We should also take advantage of specific commissions present in our circumscriptions, especially those related to the mission, and give general guidelines for an increasingly synodal work, involving the various branches present, privileging the area of basic and ongoing formation and some specific social ministries, according to contexts.

5. SYNODAL PROCESS



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Undoubtedly, the added value of this process was its synodal approach: a journey made together in collaboration and involvement. As briefly described in the introduction, **the process started from reality and from the grassroots.** This remains the key: to continue the journey, ensuring continuity, keeping in mind the founding track.

Synodality is not a method, but a style of life and presence, possible only if it starts from a true conversion of the heart, mind and missionary vision, which gradually lead to the conversion of structures and institutions. Pope Francis has also said this, since what is proposed to others, must also lead to a *“conversion of the papacy”* (EG no. 32).

There can be no more excuses and alibis: our Comboni Family will have a happy future, as Daniel Comboni dreamed, to the extent that: it promotes synodality; gradually changes its organizational model; and, at all lev-

els, better understands the role of leadership. We have a great responsibility: in this change of epoch, we cannot and must not pass on to the new generations the witness of the Comboni charism extinguished or in decline.

We feel that this is the time of listening, of discernment and intercession in the Spirit. With courage we must get involved in the synodal journey proposed by Pope Francis for the entire Catholic Church, with the theme *“Communion - Participation - Mission”*.

Furthermore, a greater attention to the paths pursued by the various Christian Churches, and a basic openness to dialogue with all communities of faith, seems to us to be an ecclesial mode in keeping with the times.

It is our task to study ways and make proposals to attract and involve the entire Comboni Family, with particular attention

to candidates from the earliest stages of formation. The sharing of experiences, with initiatives carried on with creativity, plus the involvement in approaches and methods, at all levels, must

be our style of presence for truly missionary effectiveness to occur.



6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GIVING CONTINUITY TO THE PROCESS



The Commission summarizes some recommendations for giving continuity to this process, which, as already been emphasized, is just at the beginning stage.

- a. Propose instruments and means to deepen the reasons that motivate Social Ministry. The work of these three years has shown that, at the basis of this service, there is always the Spirit of the Risen Lord and the strength of the Comboni charism. Since their presence from within is not always made explicit, the “uncertainty” that follow sometimes lends itself to confuse these ministries with the action of other associations or NGOs. Some Sisters and Confreres have experienced such confusion.
- b. Keep the Mapping updated, and invite all Comboni Family members to share the experience. It is important to review, in the light of experience, the tool of data collection - both in its schematic and narrative form - so as to ensure that responses reflect concrete reality as much as possible, and facilitate a more adequate quantification of the various items. This also avoids digressions and multiple interpretations.
- c. Appoint a Commission, no doubt enlarged, indicating precise objectives and tasks. The Commission will work alongside the general secretariats of the Comboni Family and/or the entities in charge of this service in the individual institutions. The Commission will point out challenges present in the various contexts, elaborate operative proposals and suggest paths verified in field experiences and read in a wise way in the light of the Spirit. The Commission will collaborate closely with the general secretariats, whose role is to favor the interconnection of the various approaches and contributions, the sapiential/ experiential and the technical/

scientific, framing them within a global context.

- d. Ensure an always better interaction between formation (basic and ongoing) with Social Ministry. In addition to the dialogue taking place between those who accompany and those being accompanied, it will be useful to provide seminars and workshops in the various stages of formation, using the material developed in recent years, in a systematic and constant manner.
- e. Present a common document
- f. Program academic specialization in the area of Social Ministry, with special attention to personnel who serve in Africa,

at the General Chapters (for CMS and MCCJ) scheduled for 2022) that shares the results of this work, beside proposing specific fields and ministries to make collaboration in the Comboni Family a praxis carried out with the institutional recognition. For example, in youth ministry, the arena of ecological conversion, migrant ministry and missionary spirituality.



in order to keep up the Comboni mission, which, on that Continent now sees a flowering of vocations that assure us a future of life. The presence of the *Institute for Social Transformation* is certainly an obligato-



ry call for those who immersed in building the Kingdom of God in Africa. It would be truly useful to explore ways in which we can draw from the accumulated experience of its more than 25 years of life. This is a path to enhance our ability to be proactive in the many fields of our ministries. We are also blessed with other prestigious academic and pastoral institutions. For example,

the *Dar Comboni* in Cairo, the *Laudato Si Missionary Center* in Kinshasa, and other centers, such as the *Lumko Institute* in South Africa. We need also to keep in mind the importance of interacting with institutions run by other ecclesial-social forces committed to the same purpose.

- g. Create a specific fund to be used for initiatives in favor of Social Ministry. These could be: participation in continental and world events, together with popular movements; produce a series of publications, along the lines of the two volumes already published. These publications could be realized at continental level, also focusing on significant themes in ministerial areas present in each continent; the use of information for missionary animation; the keeping up-to-date of our Mapping initiative in the Comboni world.

7. GRATITUDE



The Commission expresses gratitude and recognition to the General Administrations of our Comboni Family for their choice to focus on evangelization in its social dimension. It was good for us to hear their constant appreciation. We treasure the words they addressed to us at the end of the 3rd webinar (June 25-26, 2021), the event that formally closed the journey entrusted to us.

This has been a graced opportunity for each of us to grow in the spirit of belonging to our

Missionary Family; to discover the many riches entrusted to our sisters, confreres, consecrated, secular and lay, who very often, in silence, like “hidden stones” are part of the foundations of a building that only others will see. This is our certainty, grounded on the faith of the Founder: people pass on, but what they have been able to (re)generate lasts forever.

May the missionary passion, experienced anew in this synodal process, help our Comboni Family give it continuity with cour-



age and determination, following in the footsteps of St. Daniel Comboni. **From the height of its 150 years of life, our Comboni Family perceives, more than ever, the call to complete in today's reality the realization of the Regeneration Plan, especially within our own Institutes.** We need support and encouragement to continue always forward and always together.

Once again, special thanks to Sr. Ida Colombo and Bro. Alberto Lamana, general counselors, who have accompanied us with dedication and closeness. Much gratitude to Fr. Daniele Moschetti, who coordinated our group with a dedication genuinely fraternal in support of the cause we carried forward in common. Heartfelt thanks also to Sr. Maria Teresa Ratti and Fr. Fernando Zolli – who drew up the draft

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Being a 'mission together' gives us a perspective full of hope and fullness of life. Let us all look ahead with confidence and far-sightedness, and with ***"the courage for the present and especially for the future"***.

Thanks again and thanks always.



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Sig. Marco Piccione
Sr. M. Teresa Ratti
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