

Claretian Discerning Leadership Workshop – ASCLA
FRATERNAL LETTER TO OUR BROTHERS IN ASCLA

February 14, 2023

Claretian Provincial House
Province of St. Thomas
Karukutty, India

Beloved Congregation in Asia:

In response to the dream of the Congregation proposed by the XXVI General Chapter, which calls for a culture of discernment among Claretian leaders, the Claretian Discerning Leadership Workshop for the ten major organisms of Asia (ASCLA) began on February 1. It was meaningful and providential to commence the workshop honouring the 184 beatified martyrs of the Congregation, who offered their lives for the love of the Church and the Congregation. Thus, we begin this fraternal letter echoing the address made by Blessed Martyr Faustino Perez when he penned his parting message to their Querida Congregacion.

Beloved Brother Missionaries in Asia, with our Blessed Mother, we join our hearts in singing the Magnificat, for the Lord has done mighty things with us in reigniting our spirits and deepening our resolve to become missionary servant leaders at the service of the Kingdom. We, 30 missionaries from the 10 Major Organisms of Asia, under the guidance of two dynamic facilitators, Frs. Gonzalo Fernandez and Paulson Veliyannoor explored the possibilities and best practices in discerning leadership in our communities, grounding ourselves within the framework of ecclesial and congregational orientations with the aid of human sciences and, at the same time, drawing insights from our real experiences as leaders.

The workshop, designed to promote in our Congregation a culture of discernment at all levels, especially among those with leadership responsibilities, intends to initiate the involvement and commitment of each member of our communities. Although the workshop here in Karukutty, India, culminates on this day, the task of creating this culture of discerning leadership continues as we return to our respective organisms. As part of the Second Process of Transformation of becoming a Community of Witnesses and Messengers, we bring with us gifts to share with you to improve our leadership in service.

“Do you still not understand?” (Mk 8:21). Today’s gospel ends with this question from Jesus to his disciples. There are still many things that we do not understand. We claim not to be experts in discerning leadership. We accept our imperfections and weaknesses with humility. In exercising the leadership ministry, we entrust the call to God’s grace. We rely on the ‘grace of the chair’ more than the ‘power of the chair’. This year and in the days ahead, we shall journey together to create a culture

of discerning leadership. Our learning here at Karukutty will be cascaded to our different communities. In the spirit of synodality, we shall walk together.

As we conclude, let us all give our filial gaze to Mary at Pentecost. Filled and led by the Spirit, she showed the disciples what it meant to listen to the Word of God. She tells us now to do whatever He tells us to do (Jn 2:5).

In the Heart of our Mary,
ASCLA Participants
Claretian Discerning Leadership Workshop