

## **SANCTIFY YOURSELF TO SANCTIFY THE OPERA.**

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*“Sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44).* The Holy God, Yahweh’s command to the people of Israel and to us today is to personalize the quality of being holy. Holiness is a call. The Dogmatic Constitution *“Lumen Gentium”* particularly chapter fifteen highlights about *“The Universal Call to Holiness”* and thus it is an invitation for every Baptized individual. Righteousness and the daily conversion is the way to Holiness. The urgent and indispensable need to sanctify ourselves is all the more asked from the religious Poor Servants of Divine Providence. Our Consecrated life is meant to animate the Opera and the Church by its vocation to Holiness. St. John Calabria obeyed diligently his confessor, Fr. Natale, who said to him often, *“Sanctify yourself, sanctify the members and the Congregation is secure.”* (Letter to his religious XXVIII, 6<sup>th</sup>Feb, 1942). He internalized those words and always emphasized on personal sanctification in order to sanctify the Congregation and the entire Church. I would say: Sanctification does not consist in words but in deeds that concretize our communion with Jesus Christ and with our brothers and sisters in our daily life. We need to spread the fragrance of holiness in our communities like the life sustaining oxygen. Tomorrow’s well being of the Congregation is measured in the way we live today, that is the genuine Spirit of the Opera, if so, we are assured of blooming in quality but if not, the spiritual ruin awaits us. Dear friends it is not an option but an obligation to respond to this call as exemplified to us by St. John Calabria. He recommends us that there is nothing can destroy the Opera but sin.

Father Calabria says to sisters in one of his letters *“By sanctifying your souls, oh Sisters, you will sanctify this Congregation that belongs to God” (Beloved sisters in the Lord, 6th June 1948).* He asks us to have this extraordinary passion of pursuing the path of holiness by belonging to the Congregation which is Lord’s. His emphasis is not at any rate on life but on being truly holy, truly good personally and, without criticizing others. The goodness of my community and the Opera depends on my righteous living. It is the totality of one’s heart that Jesus demands from those who love Him; without prayer and contemplation of the Word of God the sanctification is unaccomplished. So love Jesus and inspire others to love Him.

*“Sisters, remember that first of all you are here to become holy” (Father John C. Parole vive, pg. 60).* *“Sisters become holy right now” (Beloved sisters in the Lord, 28th Feb 1921).* There is an urgent requirement to purify our hearts and minds without any delay. Let us not waste our time in the Opera living in mediocrity but conform ourselves with the Will of God which knocks at our heart, *“Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt, 5:48).* Our presence in the Congregation is about *“To be”* rather than *“To do”*. I would say that holiness should spread like spiritual virus. How striking it would be if we respond vigorously to reach out to all! Sanctification of ‘oneself’ is far more effective than handling the pandemic we face today. If holiness was possible for Blessed Carlo Acutis in our time, it is not impossible for you and for

me, for God is breathing His Holy Spirit to us, let us breathe in this Spirit and sanctify the Opera, the Church and the world.