



MESSAGE OF THE BROTHER GENERAL ANIMATOR

*As they went to tell the disciples,
Jesus met them, saying, "Do not be afraid;
go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee,
and there, they will see me". (Cf. Mt 28:8-10)*

Dear Brothers, members of the Nazarene Fraternities, Aspiring Brothers, Educational Communities, Christian Communities, Catechists and friends of the Sa-Fa Family:

The Easter season brings us the news of Christ's Resurrection which becomes light and hope for those of us who walk in the midst of uncertainties and darkness. Jesus says to us as he did to the women who went to the tomb: "Do not be afraid". May joy and peace, the Easter gifts of the Risen Jesus, be with us all!

The resurrection of Jesus confirms the truthfulness of his message.

We live in a complicated world situation due to war, terrorism, economic crises and the struggle for geopolitical and ideological control of the world. The world in its globality has entered into a dynamic of conflicting interests that generate violence. At the same time many people are hungry for bread, and many others for peace, justice, freedom or love. How to satisfy this hunger, where to discover the good of peace, where to find hope, where to look for strength, where to look for the meaning of life?

We are all searching for the meaning of life, for knowledge of the truth and how to solve the problems we experience. Sometimes, we focus on our own reflections, sometimes, we look for solutions in culture, science or politics. In this search, let us not exclude Jesus. Let us put him at the forefront. His Word, the action of his Spirit and the bread of the Eucharist will lead us to enter into the dynamism of the resurrection that gives full life, capable of offering a total meaning to what we are and what we do.

Jesus proposes himself as the way, the truth, the life and the light. The resurrection is the confirmation of the validity of his message, of his proposal, of his life. Without the light of Easter we will continue to see evil, frustration and despair as the reality to which we are predestined, when, on the contrary, we are called to be children of light.

Life is an encounter

The women who were looking for the dead body of Jesus to continue their mourning and honour the deceased met Jesus who spoke to them and showed them the way to be reunited with their brothers and himself. The encounter with Jesus leads us to the encounter with the brothers: "Jesus went out to meet them, saying, 'Go and tell my brothers'".

Life is a continuous encounter with nature, with people, with the situations in which we live and even with mystery. Our life is woven with the threads of small encounters that give us the definitive way of being and living. We often remember the encounters we had with people or groups because they left a mark, a good feeling, an advice or a gesture that made us grow. The encounter, if it is true and unites hearts, enriches the spirit.

Everyday encounters can be enlightened by the encounter with the risen Jesus who gives us meaning and value beyond human circumstances. This encounter makes us discover the depth of a relationship, a friendship, a job or a celebration by bringing them into the category of love where

everything acquires meaning. Faith in the risen Jesus, given out of love for mankind and raised by the love of the Father, leads us to open ourselves to the God of life and love.

Experiencing the presence of the risen Christ in one's own life and finding him "alive" is the greatest spiritual joy we can have, an explosion of light that does not leave us paralysed. Rather, it sets us into motion and impels us to bring this news to others and to bear witness to the living presence of Jesus. It is what animated "the haste", "the going", "the witnessing", "the joy" of the first disciples in the days following the resurrection: "The women, fearful but full of joy, hastened away from the tomb and went to tell the disciples" (Mt 28:8).

We are beings inhabited by him and he says to us on many occasions: "Do not be afraid, I am with you". Let us joyfully live the encounter with Jesus and let us put into play the values that generate constructive encounters with our brothers and sisters: valuing the other, listening, openness of heart, welcome, respect, kindness, peace The Spirit of Christ will show us new ways, open new doors, transform the bad into good and the impossible into the possible.

The face of peace is fraternity

It is we men who decide to wage war or to live in peace. The risen Jesus in his post-Easter appearances greeted us with the Jewish Shalom aleichem: "Peace be with you". Peace is not only the absence of war or conflict, but also entails brotherhood among people. Brotherhood is the truest face of peace.

"Go and tell my brothers". The resurrection highlights the term brother with which the disciples of Jesus identify themselves. A fraternity with new and transformed relationships. Brotherhood manifests the desire to make all people one family and is a source of unity and reconciliation. Christians can demonstrate that love for God and for our brothers and sisters can transform human relationships and that communion is possible beyond the bonds of blood, culture, language or education. Fraternity must bear witness to the beauty of the new bonds that can be created between people.

Our world needs to experience the fraternity built by gestures of solidarity, of welcome or of tenderness towards those who suffer because of wars, who live outside their countries or their regions because they are displaced by any violence or who do not have enough to live on. They are our brothers and sisters and we must be touched by their suffering and their need.

Isaiah's promise: "Listen to me and you will eat good food, you will delight yourselves with tasty delicacies" (Is 55:2) can be an image of these new fraternal relationships. It does not refer here to the techno-economic paradigm that we live in and that plunges us into a consumerist maelstrom that leads us to isolate ourselves and reduce relationships to the welfare group (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 203-204). It refers to the utopia of the Kingdom in which all men and women feel part of the same human family. We need workers of fraternity and we can all be agents and builders of fraternal love in the environments in which we live.

Likewise, we are called to live and foster fraternity in the process of revitalisation that we want to promote in the Sa-Fa Family. On this path, we are asked to practise synodality that makes as many people as possible participate in the life that we want to generate. And we are also invited to grow in a sense of belonging in order to care for the Sa-Fa Family as a Family that wants to live and offer the family spirit.

May the Easter of this year renew our motivation to bring people the life, love, light, peace and brotherhood that Christ proclaims and offers us with his resurrection.

Happy Easter 2023!

Brother Francisco Javier Hernando de Frutos, GA.