

**PICCOLA OPERA
DELLA DIVINA PROVVIDENZA**

(Don Orione)

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Rome, 12 march 2022

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DIRETTORE GENERALE

Prot. TV/22.18

Chaos will be won by charity!

Dear

Brothers and members of the Orionine Family,

The recurrence of the 82nd anniversary of the birth into heaven of our Founding Father, on this 12th March, is celebrated by invoking, with his words, the gift of peace: *“Let us invoke Mary to obtain peace and may Our Lady touch the heart of God, as much as that of men”*.

Unfortunately, as the Holy Father said at the Angelus, *“Rivers of blood and tears are flowing in Ukraine”* which demonstrate the difficulty and insensitivity *“of men”* to put an end to this war that *“sows death, destruction and misery”*. In fact, *“The number of victims is increasing, as are the people fleeing, especially mothers and children. The need for humanitarian assistance in that troubled country is growing dramatically by the hour.”* We must intensify our prayer, not let the vigour of our fraternity wane and, with the Holy Father, cry out: *“War is madness! Stop, please!”*

We launched the preparation for the General Chapter in the name of charity for the new times: *Let us throw ourselves into the fire of the new times!* Providence immediately gave us the opportunity to live, in practice, what we preach in words. I am referring to the fact that the Ukrainian emergency is receiving a generous and impressive response from all. First of all, I want to underline the heroic work that our brothers and sisters, who have remained on the war site, are carrying out. I would like to think that Don Orione would have immediately rushed to help those populations as he did on the occasion of the two earthquakes: Fr. Egidio Montanari, Fr. Moreno Cattelan (whose birthday is exactly today) and Bro. Mykhailo Kostiv have become his hands today.

The whole Congregation, however, has set in motion behind them. The first welcome made in Poland and Romania, the solidarity and the welcome of the various houses in Italy and of all the benefactors, are only the most evident responses of a great fraternity movement. In fact, *“The houses are not ours, but those of Jesus Christ: the charity of Jesus Christ does not make exception of persons and does not close doors; at the door of Piccolo Cottolengo it does not ask the comers from where he comes from, if he has a faith or if he has a name, but only if he has a pain! We are all children of God, all brothers”*. (Scritti 114, 285)

This response of charity helps us to overcome the spirit of anguish and desolation that the daily news, reported by the media, could arouse in us. Don Orione himself invites us to have an enterprising and positive spirit. In fact, he said: *“May a new humanity grow in us and in our humble Houses! Let us give an end to selfishness, and grow in the love of God and of the brothers: may God grow so much in us that He is the one living and no longer us, and we may fill the earth with a new army: an army of victims who may overcome strength: an*

*army of sowers of God, who sow their very life, to sow and plough in the hearts of the brothers and of the people Jesus, the Lord: let us form a great, invincible army: the army of charity, led by Christ, our Lady, the Pope and the Bishops! The army of charity will restore among the withered human masses, such a strong and very sweet life and light of God that the whole world will benefit, and everything will be brought back to Christ, as St. Paul already said. And the storm, which is now so frightening, will be dissipated, and **the present chaos will be overcome, because the spirit of charity conquers everything**, and, above the amount of human hands, the hand of God will appear, and Christ will bring everything back to its splendour and its sweet kingdom.” (Scritti 115,127)*

An affectionate thank you to all of you who have opened the doors of your homes to refugees arriving from the East. Every day the list of people welcomed gets longer, a sign of the great generosity that characterizes us these days. Evil is overcome with good: Do good always! Revenge would only move the axis, but it always remains evil and then it is not God who wins. Only charity will save the world and give order to chaos! How can we forget the testimony of Baron Von Hugel when he describes the experience of his daughter who saw Don Orione at work during the Marsica earthquake: *“He was carrying two children, one on each arm, **and wherever he went, he brought order, hope and faith in the midst of all that turmoil and despair**. My daughter told me that this made everyone feel that Love was right at the bottom of all things, a Love that precisely there in those places manifested itself through the complete affectionate gift of self, of that humble priest.”*

In the many news that I receive, I see Don Orione in action in many religious and lay people. But even for those unable to act directly on the field, there is ample space to contribute to the growth of Love. Let each of us ask ourselves: I, son of Don Orione, what can I do today to manifest this Love? The Lord will then transform it into grace for the affected populations.

Courage, brothers! With our sleeves rolled up, let us be at the forefront of responding to all forms of poverty with concrete signs and thus responding to the challenges that this new world throws every day at us more and more. We always keep in mind that Don Orione was appreciated because *“in that turmoil and despair”, “he brought order, hope and faith”*. In celebrating him, let us try to imitate him in holiness and charity.

Brotherly,


P. Tarcísio G. Vieira
General Superior

