



LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

BLESSED GUIDO MARIA CONFORTI

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**Bishop and
Founder of the Xaverian Missionaries**

I feel at this moment the love of Christ in all its gentleness, a love far stronger than any natural affection. The cause that unites us in a single family appears before me in all its grandeur. With these sentiments I reach out to all those who have given their name to our society, as if they were here present, and to all those who will do so in the future; I embrace them all and, though I am unworthy, I ask God to grant them the spirit of the apostles and the gift of final perseverance.

I extend my blessing to all, in the hope that, having been members of the same family on earth, we may one day be reunited in heaven.

Blessed Conforti, Testament Letter, no. 11

Note:

The formula for the celebration of the eucharist was approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship on 28 February 1996. Some minor changes were introduced for the celebrations of Xaverian communities: these were approved on 9 August 1996.

No provision is made in the letter of approval for Old Testament readings. Nevertheless, it was deemed appropriate to suggest one Old Testament reading for the most solemn celebrations.

The common preface VII (of the Italian Episcopal Conference) has been included as an alternative to the preface of the Pastors of the church. This aims at offering a wider choice of texts, allowing for a better expression of the spirituality of Guido Maria Conforti.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF GUIDO MARIA CONFORTI

GUIDO MARIA CONFORTI was born in Ravadese (Parma) on 30 March 1865, the eighth of ten children born to Rinaldo Conforti and Antonia Adorni. The good education he received from his mother was brought to completion in the school of the Christian Brothers in Parma. He often gave the credit for his vocation to the catechesis imparted by these brothers and to the unique personal experience he had in contemplating the crucified Christ. In 1876, despite the opposition of his father, he entered the seminary, completing his studies with distinction and excelling in diligence, piety, consistency and obedience. Blessed Andrea Ferrari was the theology rector during those years. Whilst still in minor orders, Guido was appointed vice-rector of the seminary, an office he was to hold also after his ordination which was celebrated on 22 September 1888. He was a remarkably capable educator, but he excelled above all in the guidance of young people through the witness of his priestly holiness and pastoral charity. His priestly and missionary vocation was born from the contemplation of the crucifix. He once wrote: «It was impossible to behold this divine example without feeling impelled to make even the most arduous sacrifice». «The crucifix is the great book that opens one's eyes to immense horizons», in fact, despite living in the Emilia Romagna region of Italy, Guido Conforti's horizons embraced the whole of humanity. His burning desire to announce the gospel to all mankind never weakened. The «spectacle» of the cross (*Lk* 23:48) spoke to his heart with a profound and intense eloquence, revealing to him the infinite love of God for all humanity. In 1895, he founded a Congregation of men consecrated to God with the sole and exclusive purpose of the evangelisation of the non-Christians. On 9 June 1902, the Servant of God was appointed Archbishop of Ravenna. On the day of his episcopal ordination, he made his religious profession together with the vow to dedicate himself without reserve to the proclamation of the Gospel «ad gentes». Whilst in Ravenna, illness compelled him to long periods of inactivity. His keen sense of responsibility towards his flock led to his resigning from his post as Archbishop. In a spirit of humility he returned to his missionary institute where, having recovered a sufficiently good degree of health, he dedicated his energies to the formation of his young candidates to missionary life and to the drafting of the Constitutions of his missionary family. Towards the end of 1907, the Pope entrusted the diocese of Parma to the Servant of God. For almost 25 years he was the good shepherd of his flock, a living sign of the «maternal concern that the Church shows towards all men, whether they belong to the Church or otherwise, paying special attention to the poor and the weakest among them» (CD 13/599). Religious instruction was the priority of his pastoral agenda: he founded schools of Christian doctrine in all parishes and prepared both male and female catechists with appropriate courses in pedagogical and religious culture. He was the first in

Italy to celebrate a catechetical week. On five occasions he carried out a full pastoral! visit of his diocese, he celebrated two diocesan synods, and founded and promoted the «Azione Cattolica», giving special attention to the youth branch. He cultivated in a particular way the cultural preparation and holiness of his priests, the formation of lay people, Catholic associations, a good quality press, popular missions, and Eucharistic, Marian and Missionary Congresses. He brought about reconciliation where there was division, and strove to bring back to the fold those who had strayed. Moved by a deep and personal love, he instilled in people an attitude of unconditional respect for the Pope. His presence in the most difficult moments in the history of Parma, though discrete and almost unnoticed, was resolute and effective, especially during the strikes in 1908 which were followed by the formation of a committee of lawyers for the defence of the rights of farmers and priests. He also played an important part in the resistance to fascism put up by a part of the city. The fascist troops withdrew from Parma on the day after the Servant of God had offered to mediate in the conflict. As a result of this, the threat of a civil war was avoided. His concern for the Church entrusted to him never distracted him from the «concern for those parts of the world where the Word of God had not yet been proclaimed» (CD 6/582). He was convinced that the proclamation of the Gospel «ad gentes» was the most effective way of re-evangelising his own people. He was untiring, therefore, in his commitment to evangelisation «ad gentes», both through the work of his own missionary family, as well as supporting every missionary animation initiative in Italy and throughout the world. He was particularly committed to assisting in the foundation and spreading of the Pontifical Missionary Union of which he was the first president. «It was providential that Fr. Paolo Manna had the support of the holy Bishop Conforti at the time of the foundation of the Missionary Union of the Clergy. Conforti not only offered valuable advice and help to the Union in its infancy stages; he also used his authority to ensure that it gained papal approval» (cf. PAUL VI, *Graves et increscentes*). In 1928 Conforti went to China to visit personally the Christians and the territories entrusted to the religious family of which he was Superior General. His presence there was a strong sign of communion among the Churches. On 5 November 1931, worn out by his work and apostolic activity, having devoutly received the Sacrament of the sick and viaticum, and following a public profession of his own personal faith, Guido Maria Conforti implored God's blessing on his priests and people and died in the peace of the Lord.

from the Beatification booklet

CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Proper texts

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Ps 95, 3-4

Tell of God's glory among the nations,
tell his marvels to every people.
Yahweh is great, loud must be his praise.

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who through the contemplation of the Cross
imprinted on the heart of Blessed Bishop Guido,
[* Founder of our Society,]
a burning love for the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations,
grant that by his intercession,
we too may be filled by the same love of Christ
to constantly work for the salvation
of all our brothers and sisters.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

R/. Amen.

In the more solemn celebrations, and keeping in mind the pastoral needs of the assembly, the presiding minister may make a wider choice of texts from the Common of Saints. Cf. "De Verbi Dei momento" (21.1.1981) no. 71 – in Ench.Vat 7, 107.

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Ezechiel

34, 11-16

I am going to look after my flock myself and keep all of it in view.

For the Lord God says this: I am going to look after my flock myself and keep all of it in view. As a shepherd keeps all his flock in view when he stands up in the middle of his scattered sheep, so shall I keep my sheep in view. I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered during the mist and darkness.

I shall bring them out of the countries where they are; I shall gather them together from foreign countries and bring them back to their

own land. I shall pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in every inhabited place in the land. I shall feed them in good pasturage; the high mountains of Israel will be their grazing ground. There they will rest in good grazing ground; they will browse in rich pastures on the mountains of Israel.

I myself will pasture my sheep, I myself will show them where to rest - it is the Lord God who speaks. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.

This is the word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 22

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me ,
to revive my drooping spirit.
He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

ALTERNATIVE READING

From the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

5,14-20

The love of Christ overwhelms us.

The love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that if one man has died for all, then all men should be dead; and the reason he died for all was so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them. From now onwards, therefore, we do not judge anyone by the standards of the flesh. Even if we did once know Christ in the flesh, that is not how we know him now. And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here.

It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on this reconciliation. In other words, God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not holding men's faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God.

This is the word of the Lord.**R/. *Thanks be to God.***

When a reading from the Old Testament is also chosen, psalm 95 may be used instead of psalm 22.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 95

R/. *Proclaim to all peoples the salvation of God.*

O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.
O sing to the Lord, bless his name.

R/. *Proclaim to all peoples the salvation of God.*

Proclaim his help day by day,
tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples.

R/. Proclaim to all peoples the salvation of God.

Give the Lord, you families of peoples,
give the Lord glory and power,
give the Lord the glory of his name.

R/. Proclaim to all peoples the salvation of God.

Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.'
The world he made firm in its place;
he will judge the peoples in fairness.

R/. Proclaim to all peoples the salvation of God.**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION***Jn 10, 14***R/. Alleluia, alleluia**

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord,
I know my sheep and they know me.

*Or**Jn 10, 16*

There are other sheep I have, says the Lord, that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well. They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, and one shepherd.

R/. Alleluia**GOSPEL****A reading from the holy Gospel according to John***10, 11-16**I am the good shepherd.*

Jesus said: 'I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep and runs away as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; this is because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well.

They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, and one shepherd.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

R/. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Father, accept this sacrifice
which we offer in memory of Blessed Guido,
and grant that we may show forth in our life
the passion of your Son, which we celebrate in this mystery.
Through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

PREFACE OF PASTORS

The presence of holy Pastors in the Church.

Father, all powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere
to give you thanks.

You give the Church this feast in honour of Blessed Guido;
you inspire us by his holy life,
instruct us in his preaching,
and give your protection in answer to his prayers.

We join the angels and the saints
as they sing their unending hymn of praise:

Or: * WEEKDAY PREFACE VII

Christ guest and pilgrim in our midst.

Father, all-powerful and ever living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks,
God of the Covenant and of peace.

You called and led Abraham out of his country,
to make him the Father of all nations.
You raised Moses, to set your people free
and lead them to the promised land.

In the fullness of time
you sent your only Son,
guest and pilgrim in our midst
to free us from sin and death.

And you sent your Spirit,
to make of all nations one new people
whose goal is your kingdom,
whose way of life is the freedom of your children,
and whose law is your command of love.

For all these marks of your kindness,
in our joy we sing to your glory
with all the angels and saints:

R/. Holy, holy, holy ...

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Mk 16, 15; Mt 28, 20

“Go out to the whole world ;
proclaim the Good News to all creation:
and know that I am with you always;
yes, to the end of time”, says the Lord.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, our God, may our Communion with this holy mystery
inflame within us the fire of that love,
which constantly nourished the life of Blessed Guido
and inspired him to dedicate his life to your Church.
Through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

Ordinary Time II - Ph 4,7

P/. May the peace of God,
which is beyond all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

A/. Amen.

P/. May almighty God bless you: the Father, ✠ the Son
and the Holy Spirit.

A/. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Common of Pastors

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

BLESSED GUIDO MARIA CONFORTI, bishop

Bishop Conforti was born at Ravadese (Parma), on 30th March 1865, and he was ordained a priest on 22nd September 1888. In 1895 he founded the Seminario Emiliano for the Foreign Missions (today the St Francis Xavier Missionary Society) and was appointed Vicar General. In 1902 he was appointed Archbishop of Ravenna, but after two years, ill health forced him to resign. Towards the end of 1907, the Pope entrusted him with the Diocese of Parma, where he remained for nearly 25 years. He took deep care of the clergy, promoted the religious education of the laity, supported the establishment and development of lay involvement in the Church, especially among the youth. He deeply cared for his diocese (he carried out five pastoral visits and organized two diocesan Synods) while being deeply involved in the missionary activity "ad gentes". He died on 5th November 1931.

SECOND READING

From the Addresses of Blessed Guido Conforti

Seventeenth address to departing Missionaries , 11th March 1928

Remain united intimately to Christ and among you.

This evening which is such a special one for you, and for all of us, reminds me of another evening - the one when Christ, after the last Supper, spoke to his Apostles with deep tenderness; He entrusted his last words and actions to them, and left them, in a manner of speaking, His last will. He appealed to them to believe firmly in Him, "et in me credite"; to love one another and to remain united intimately to Him, like a branch is united to the vine. He was forewarning them of trials and persecutions. Lastly He addressed a heartfelt prayer to His Father on their behalf and on behalf of all who would believe in Him, ending His sublime speech with the strong wish that they too would meet one day, where He Himself would be.

Young Missionaries, you have reached the starting point of your race, you are at the outset of your ministry. Take the words of the

Divine Master as being addressed to you. The Beloved Disciple handed them faithfully down to us in the sublime speech of the Last Supper, when Jesus began to address His Apostles in the Upper Room and on the way to the Garden of Olives. Meditate upon these words - they must be the central point of your ministry.

Are you determined to succeed in following His will? If you are, make sure you have, first of all, a living faith in your Divine Master. Let that faith permeate all your thoughts, your affections, and your actions. Place that faith before all your encounters, in all situations of your life, and behave according to what it tells you. That faith must be your constant guide.

Love, furthermore, one another; let this love bring you ever closer to one another, so that you may be united heart and soul in such a way that your joys and sorrows will be shared by all. Only then you will then gain an invincible strength, against which all your enemies' efforts will fail.

And always remain intimately united to Christ, as a branch is united to the vine - united in heart and mind, united in meditating on His divine doctrine, united in the Eucharist of which you are ministers and sharers, united in prayer, united in the constant effort to be like Him, the model of perfection for all, but especially for the Apostles.

In this way alone will your ministry be fruitful allowing you to produce true fruits. But do not forget that you must sow in tears. For this reason Christ foretold of persecutions: don't let this be a source of scandal for you: "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you too". Your Confreres have heard this same call and have gone before you into the vineyard, and have already experienced the truth of those words. Some have already undergone imprisonment and all have experienced trials and tribulations of some sort or another.

Your fate won't be any different, because you are being sent to carry out the same mission as they have been given, and you will face the same difficulties as they have. This is, after all, the apostle's chalice and Christ hands it over to you too with the same words He

addressed to the sons of Zebedee two thousand years ago: "Can you drink of the cup that I am going to drink?"

And at the same time He reminds you: "let nothing trouble you, or cause you fear. Your sadness will turn into joy". These words will not fail you either, because Jesus expressed a vivid petition to His eternal Father praying for that promise to be fulfilled. "Holy Father, save all these you have given me, and let them be one day where I am". Remind yourselves frequently of these holy words when you face the trials you meet, and then you will rejoice in spite of everything because you will realize that your eternal joys will be commensurate with your trials now. One day you too - you must not doubt it - will have a share in the glory of the Apostles; you will share the same glory of Christ, and also the same happiness.

RESPONSORY

Cf. Mk 16, 15; Jn 16, 33

V/. Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation; * be brave, I have conquered the world.

R/. Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation; * be brave, I have conquered the world.

V/. In the world you will have trouble, but be brave;

R/. Be brave, I have conquered the world.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O God, who through the contemplation of the Cross
imprinted on the heart of Blessed Bishop Guido,
[* Founder of our Society,]
a burning love for the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations,
grant that by his intercession,
we too may be filled by the same love of Christ
to constantly work for the salvation
of all our brothers and sisters.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

R/. Amen.

VIGIL CELEBRATION

The aim of this vigil is to celebrate as one family the presence of God, our Father, in our midst.

Each community will prepare its own vigil, taking care to ensure that the celebration reflects the life and spirit of the brothers united in the community.

The following outline is offered as an example of this kind of celebration.

1. OPENING SONG

The community gathers in a suitable place for a fraternal celebration (chapel, refectory or other place); the celebration begins with a hymn that all are familiar with:

- SIAMO ARRIVATI
- COME UNICO PANE
- VIENEN CON ALEGRIA o FORMAMOS LA GRAN FAMILIA

INTRODUCTION

We are gathered together, on the vigil of the feast of our Founder, to keep watch and to tell of the "Great Deeds" the Lord has worked among us, and the simple "stories" of our Family.

Together we remember that this Family of ours has reached out beyond the boundaries of the Emilia region in Italy, and of Europe, indeed, reaching all corners of the world. Besides sharing the history of our Family, let's also be willing to share what our heart inspires us to disclose during this celebration.

2. READING FROM THE TESTAMENT LETTER

*The Testament Letter can be read as a whole or, alternatively extracts can be chosen (especially to be recommended are nos. 2-3 , 7 - 9 and 11) , allowing moments for **comments from the participants** - an opportunity for sharing. Another suggestion would be to read extracts from **letters of confreres** working in the missions.*

3. ADAPTATION OF EVENING PRAYER

*The Vigil will conclude with an adaptation of **Evening Prayer** which will include the following: **Psalm 132** (preferably sung) - **Lighting of the Lamp** - the **Christological Hymn** (Ep 3, 1-10) - the **Singing of the Magnificat** - **Intercessions** - **Our Father** - and **final Prayer**.*

*The accompanying prayers will help the community to proclaim the psalm or canticle in the most suitable way, in accordance with its own literary genre. Where there is a sufficient number of confreres, the formula suggested below can be used, otherwise the community prays in two choruses, or alternating between a **soloist** and the **rest of the assembly**.*

PSALM 132

In this psalm the scented oil used in the anointing and the morning dew are self explanatory images to the Israelite, reminding the psalmist of the beautiful experience of a community, gathered round the priests and levites in the holy city, on the occasion of a pilgrimage.

- 1.** How good and how pleasant it is,
when brothers live in unity!
- 2.** It is like precious oil upon the head
running down upon the beard,
running down upon Aaron's beard
upon the collar of his robes.
- 1.** It is like the dew of Hermon which falls
on the heights of Sion.
For there the Lord gives his blessing,
life for ever.

Or: CP 504

- 1.** Com'è bello stare insieme,
essere tra noi fratelli,
camminare nella gioia,
figli di un solo Padre.
- 2.** Viene dall'alto la sua grazia,
viene su di noi la pace,
come rugiada che dall'Ermon
scende sul monte santo.
- 3.** Gloria in eterno a Dio Padre,
gloria a Cristo Amico,
gloria allo Spirito che ci unisce,
Trinità di immenso amore.

LIGHTING OF THE LAMP

In the early Christian communities a lamp used to be lit to signal the start of the festal celebrations; we too light up an evening lamp to mark the beginning of our "Great Day of Celebration" commemorating our Father and Founder.

We use the prayer of Hyppolitus for the "Welcome of the lamp during the community's supper".

- P/.** I give you thanks, o God,
through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord,
because you have shed your light upon us,
and revealed to us the eternal light.

We have come to the end of our day
 and are approaching the threshold of the night.
 We have been suffused by the light of the day,
 which you created, filling us with joy.
 And now we have Your light
 to lead us through the evening of our day.
 On this account we rejoice in singing
 of your holiness and your glory
 through your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
 Through him and with him all glory, power and honour are yours,
 with the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

R/. Amen.

CANTICLE FROM EPHESIANS 3, 1-10

"The mystery of the call"

God loved Israel first when "he was a child". Before man can express any personal plea, God reveals his love gratuitously. The only thing man can show is his poverty. The history of divine love towards believers goes beyond time and beyond created reality (vv. 4-9b): in the beginning was love, and love is our refuge. From all eternity God has called us to be his children through his Son. Let us bless God, who has granted us this initiating grace in Christ.

A/. Blessed be the God and Father, *proclamation of blessing*
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

1C/. He chose us in him *call and predestination*
 before the foundation of the world,
 that we should be holy
 and blameless before him.
 He destined us in love
 to be his sons through Jesus Christ,
 according to the purpose of his will.

2C/. To the praise of his glorious grace *thanksgiving and forgiveness*
 which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.
 In him we have redemption through his blood,
 the forgiveness of our trespasses,
 according to the riches of his grace
 which he lavished upon us.

3C/. He has made known to us *revelation*
 in all wisdom and insight *of the mystery*
 the mystery of his will,

according to his purpose
which he set forth in Christ.

His purpose he set forth in Christ,
as a plan for the fullness of time,
to unite all things in him,
things in heaven and things on earth.

PSALM PRAYER

P/. Blessed are you, Lord our God, for your love for us has been great, that without deserving it on our part you chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world; increase in us the spirit of sonship, and our life will become a canticle of praise to you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

MAGNIFICAT**Lk 1, 45-55**

For the text to maintain its quality of a canticle, it would be more appropriate to sing it.

A/. My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her lowliness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed.
The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him.
He puts forth his arm in strength
and scatters the proud-hearted.
He casts the mighty from their thrones
and raises the lowly.
He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy,
the mercy promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his sons for ever.

INTERCESSION

*Refer to the suggested texts for **Morning** or **Evening Prayer** for the most appropriate format for this celebration.*

OUR FATHER**FINAL PRAYER**

P/. O God, who through the contemplation of the Cross
imprinted on the heart of Blessed Guido,
Founder of our Society,
you inspired his love
for the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations,
grant that by his intercessions,
we too may be filled by the same love of Christ
so as to constantly strive for the salvation
of all our brothers and sisters.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ ...

A/. Amen.

4. FINAL GREETING AND SIGN OF PEACE.

MORNING PRAYER

The format suggested here is, hopefully, more suitable to our Xaverian Communities, with a selection of texts which highlight the figure and the message of Guido Maria Conforti, Father and Founder of our missionary family.

The **Liturgy of the Hours** proposes a proper text for Lauds taken from “**the Common of Pastors and Doctors of the church**”.

Cf. the respective volumes of the national editions of the breviary.

A wider choice of texts from scripture and the writings of the Founder are offered for those who prefer a more Xaverian style of celebration.

The accompanying prayers will help the community to proclaim the psalm or canticle in the most suitable way, in accordance with its own literary genre. When a sufficient number of confreres are present, the following parts can be delegated:

A/. assembly

P/. president

G/. guide

R/. reader

1/. first soloist

2/. second soloist

HYMN

The hymn from the *Common of Pastors and Doctors of the Church* may be replaced by another well known hymn, for example:

WALK IN THE LIGHT

The Spirit lives to set us free.

Walk, walk in the light.

He binds us all in unity.

Walk, walk in the light.

**Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord.**

Jesus promised life to all. **Walk...**

The dead were awakened by his call. **Walk...**

He died in pain on Calvary. **Walk...**

To save the lost like you and me. **Walk...**

Or:

TELL THE WORLD OF THIS LOVE

SIAMO ARRIVATI **CP 197** / COME UNICO PANE **CP 59**

FORMAMOS LA GRAN FAMILIA / VIENEN CON ALEGRIA

PSALM 83

"They are happy, who dwell in your house"

A group of pilgrims arrive in Jerusalem. They enter the temple and join up with one of them who recalls - the longing experienced over a long time, the joy of being near the altar of the Lord, the hardships of the journey which is now spoken of joyously, expressing a heart-felt prayer at the privilege of being in the House of God. The group joins in, proclaiming the happiness they also experience, singing God's praises in the temple and at having made the decision to make the pilgrimage. They ask that God look on "your anointed", and they proclaim God's generosity to his faithful people.

1/. How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord, God of hosts.

My soul is longing and yearning,
is yearning for the courts of the Lord.

My heart and my soul ring out their joy
to God, the living God.

The sparrow herself finds a home
and the swallow a nest for her brood;
she lays her young by your altars,
Lord of hosts, my king and my God.

They are happy, who dwell in your house,
for ever singing your praise.

acclamation

P/. They are happy, whose strength is in you,
in whose hearts are the roads to Sion.

As they go through the Bitter Valley
they make it a place of springs
the autumn rain covers it with blessings.
They walk with ever growing strength,
they will see the God of gods in Sion.

narrative

2/. O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer,
give ear, O God of Jacob.

Turn your eyes, O God, our Shield,
look on the face of your anointed.

invocation

One day within your courts
is better than a thousand elsewhere.

witness

The threshold of the house of God
I prefer to the dwellings of the wicked.

**A/. For the Lord God is a rampart, a shield;
he will give us his favour and glory,
The Lord will not refuse any good
to those who walk without blame.
Lord, God of hosts,
happy the man who trusts in you!**

approval

Through the Founder the Lord gathered us into one religious family that the Church, the new brotherhood in union with Christ, may be made present among non-Christians. As a family, we share all: faith, mission commitment, hopes, joys, concerns, spiritual and material goods. Those entrusted with authority within the family are first and foremost signs and agents of communion.

Xaverian Constitutions, 35

Love, furthermore, one another; let this love bring you ever closer to each other, so that you may be united heart and soul in such a way that your joys and sorrows will be shared by all of you. You will then gain an invincible strength, against which all your enemies' efforts will fail.

17th Address to Departing Missionaries, 11 March 1928

Psalm Prayer

P/. O God, our King, you declare happy the one who dwells in your house to sing your praises for ever, we ask you to send the Spirit of your Son on your Church, that by acknowledging him as Lord and God, we may be ready for Him to recreate in us His image and become worthy to enter your everlasting dwelling place for ever and ever. Amen.

CANTICLE OF JEREMIAH 31, 10-14

“He who scattered Israel will gather him”

Taken from a long poem which proclaims the hope that the Lord will lead the exiles back to their land, vv. 10-14 contain a message of salvation addressed to “the peoples”. The good news is for the whole world. Wherever the church is present it must be the light of the world, so that from the ends of the earth the people of those redeemed may be formed. Let us praise God together with the missionary Church.

G/. O nations, hear the word of the Lord, *
proclaim it to the far-off coasts.
Say: “He who scattered Israel will gather him
and guard him as a shepherd guards his flock”.

proclamation

A/. *For the Lord has ransomed Jacob,
has saved him from an overpowering hand.*

motivation

G/. They will come and shout for joy on Mount Zion, *
they will stream to the blessings of the Lord,
to the corn, the new wine and the oil, *
to the flocks of sheep and the herds.
Their life will be like a watered garden. *
They will never be weary again.
Then the young girls will rejoice and will dance, *
the men, young and old, will be glad.

1/. I will turn their mourning into joy, * oracle
 I will console them, give gladness for grief.
 The priests I will again fill with plenty, *
 and my people shall be filled with my blessings.

A/. For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, *
has saved him from an overpowering hand.

Go therefore, again I tell you, trusting in God, and may the Angel of the Lord guide your steps towards the goal you aspire to. I pray that your ministry be fruitful and that the echo of your peaceful achievements may reach us as well by means of your letters. They will be written with God looking over you, in simplicity but with feeling, and they will be for us a source of wonder and at the same time an invitation for us to work and to sacrifice ourselves for the most holy of all causes.

Good-bye, my dearest brothers, in a few moments you will leave this holy Upper Room where you felt the peace and the happiness which come from serving God and you will walk in the direction of your Garden of Olives, and later of Calvary, but remember - from Calvary one quickly finds one's way to mount Tabor and from there to the transfiguration of the heavenly glory.

4th Address to Departing Missionaries, 25 January 1907

Psalm Prayer

P/. O God, our Creator and Saviour, you sent your Son as a prophet to all nations, that the light of the Gospel message might shine to the ends of the earth. Grant that all who confess your name may be true witnesses of the Gospel, and that all peoples may gather and sing to your name on your holy mountain Sion. Through Christ our Lord.

PSALM 66

“Let all the peoples praise you”

A canticle with a refrain, an appeal to God's goodness, and the heartfelt hope that all peoples may come to appreciate God's gifts and praise him. v. 7 is an indication that the psalm may belong to a celebration for harvest time. The psalm is clearly “responsorial” and it would be appropriate to sing the refrain.

A/. Let the peoples praise you, O God; * motive
let all the peoples praise you.

G/. O God, be gracious and bless us * blessing
 and let your face shed its light upon us.
 So will your ways be known upon earth
 and all nations learn your saving help..

A/. Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.

G/. Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice. *
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth.

extension

**A/. Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.**

G/. The earth has yielded its fruit *
for God, our God, has blessed us.
May God still give us his blessing *
till the ends of the earth revere him.

signs of God's blessing

**A/. Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.**

After two thousand years, in this solemn moment, within this house of God, the beautiful scene is re-enacted. I too, in the name of Jesus Christ, in the name of the Church who continues to carry out His work, say to these new Apostles: Go and preach the Gospel to the far away lands of China, to the far away lands of the Apostolic Vicariate of Cheng-Chow and of the Apostolic Prefecture of Loyang. Other confreres of yours have gone before you to that wide field; they have ploughed farrows and sowed the seed of the Divine Word. But so much more is still left to be done!...

You will encounter physical pain, trials of the spirit, lack many things, suffer persecutions and ungrateful moments. You will not look for but you will not lack also moments of pure joy, that joy which the Lord keeps for His Apostles: joys in the goals achieved, the souls saved by your apostolic zeal. And those joys will make you forget all ungratefulness and make acceptable your suffering for Christ.

22nd Address to Departing Missionaries, 27 September 1931

Psalm Prayer

P/. All powerful and eternal God, your grace and blessing fill with light the life of your children scattered throughout the world; increase the number of those who believe in you, that they may be your witnesses - the light of the world and the salt of the earth, to the ends of the earth, and may all nations sing your praises.
Through Christ our Lord.

READING

2 Cor 5,14-15.17

The love of Christ spurs us on

R/. This is because the love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that if one man has died for all, then all men should be dead; and the reason he died for all was so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them. And for anyone who is

in Christ , there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here.

RESPONSORY

V/. I placed watchmen on your towers, Jerusalem, * they watch over your Church.

R/. I placed watchmen on your towers, Jerusalem, * they watch over your Church.

V/. They will never cease to tell of your name.

R/. They watch on your Church.

V/. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

R/. I placed watchmen on your towers, Jerusalem, * they watch over your Church.

BENEDICTUS

Antiphon: Do not be afraid what to speak,
the Spirit of your Father will tell you what to say.

INTERCESSIONS

G/. Let us pray that God grant us the understanding and the will to live more fundamentally the demands of our missionary vocation following the charism of our Founder.

A/. *Lord, give us the light and the strength of your Spirit.*

G/. Let us pray that the Lord grant us a living faith which enables us to “see, love, seek God in all” *cf. Const. 3*

A/. *Lord, help us to see you in the beauty of creation, but above all, help us to love you in the brothers we share our life with and to look for you and to find you in the least of your brothers.*

G/. Let us pray that, called by the Spirit to live in the same family, we may learn to love as he has loved us. *cf. Const. 5*

A/. *Lord, help us to recognize the diversity of gifts, of ministries and of culture in our brothers, as a source of richness for our own personal growth, and as a more appropriate service towards evangelization.*

G/. Let us pray that the number of those who proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom to non-Christians may steadily increase.

cf. Const. 15

A/. Lord, raise up in your people priests, religious and lay people who will carry your name to the ends of the earth and, inspired by our witness, may the number of those who join our Xaverian family increase.

G/. Let us pray for our parents, relatives and benefactors.

cf. Const. 5,2

A/. Lord, pour on them your abundant blessings; grant them the joy in giving and give them a kinship with those who suffer, those who are poor and those who feel segregated from society.

G/. Let us pray that God may welcome into his kingdom our deceased confreres, all those who have walked with us and have loved us, and all the faithful departed who entrusted themselves to His divine mercy.

A/. Lord, grant that they may share your glory and grant them the reward you have promised to the just.

Other intentions may be added.

Or the suggested formula of Vespers

P/. Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

A/. Our Father ...

P/. O God, through the contemplation of the Cross imprinted on the heart of Blessed Bishop Guido, Founder of our Society, you inspired his love for the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations, grant that by his intercessions, we too may be filled by the same love of Christ so as to constantly strive for the salvation of all our brothers and sisters. Through our Lord Jesus Christ ...

A/. Amen.

Or

P/. O God, you have given us in Jesus the perfect model of the missionary, help us to imitate him and to continue his mission in the world, following the example of our Father and Founder

Guido Maria Conforti,
that your kingdom may reach the ends of the earth.
Through Christ our Lord.

A/. Amen.

CONCLUSION

Ordinary Time II - Phil 4,7

P/. May the peace of God,
which is beyond all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

A/. Amen.

P/. And may the blessing of Almighty God,
Father, ✠ Son and Holy Spirit,
come upon you and remain with you forever.

A/. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER

Song to replace the Hymn from the Common of Pastors.

The format suggested here is, hopefully, more suitable for our Xaverian communities, with a selection of texts which highlight the figure and message of Guido Maria Conforti, Father and Founder of our missionary family.

HYMN

The hymn from the Common of Pastors and Doctors of the Church may be replaced by another well known hymn, for example:

TELL THE WORLD OF THIS LOVE

For God so loved the world
he gave us his only Son,
Jesus Christ our Savior,
his most precious one.
He has sent us his message of love
and sends those who hear
to bring the message to everyone
in a voice loud and clear.

***Let us tell the world of his love
the greatest love the world has known
search the world
for those who have walked astray
and lead them home.***

***Fill the world's darkest corners
with this light from up above.
Walk every step, every mile, every road
and tell the world,
tell the world of this love.***

Or:

**WALK IN THE LIGHT
SIAMO ARRIVATI CP 197
FORMAMOS LA GRAN FAMILIA
VIENEN CON ALEGRIA
COME UNICO PANE CP 59**

PSALM 99*“Serve the Lord with gladness”*

A hymn which invites the assembly to serve in the Temple because the Lord is God the Creator. What follows is the Covenant formula (see Psalm 94) by which the people recognize the double link with God - as Creator (He has made us), - and as Saviour (we belong to him). A new invitation follows, addressed to the people gathered the entrance of the Temple, to go into the Temple and give thanks and praise to the Lord who is faithful and merciful.

G/. Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.

invitation

Serve the Lord with gladness. *

Come before him, singing for joy.

Know that he, the Lord, is God.

A/. *He made us, we belong to him, **
we are his people, the sheep of his flock.

profession of faith

G/. Go within his gates, giving thanks.

Enter his courts with songs of praise. *

Give thanks to him and bless his name.

A/. *Indeed how good is the Lord,*
*eternal his merciful love. **
He is faithful from age to age.

reason for praising

The entry into mission activity is a particularly significant moment in the life of any Xaverian. It requires a cordial acceptance of new surroundings, an earnest analysis of the situation, study of local languages, concern to discover urgent mission priorities, and a commitment to a life style which fits into the local environment and yet remains within his mission vocation.

*Constitutions, 71****Psalm Prayer***

P/. O God, to serve you is to love you: you have raised up among us your servant Jesus, our teacher and Lord; grant that we may serve him in joy and that we may learn the happiness of devoting ourselves to our brothers, in the hope that we may enter, although unworthy servants, into the joy of our Lord, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 14

“Who shall be admitted to your tent?”

The psalm is a liturgy introducing an act of worship. It proclaims that the worship which is acceptable to God demands carrying out in one's life the commands of the law. This is a constant theme in the teaching of the prophets, and it is also the basis of the Christian worship of God, a worship understood as a life concretely dedicated to God and therefore requiring a personal conversion in order to accept the will of God (Rom 12, 1-2).

**A/. Lord, who will be admitted to your tent *
and dwell on your holy mountain?**

question

**1/. He who walks without fault; *
he who acts with justice,
and speaks the truth from his heart;
he who does not slander with his tongue;
he who does no wrong to his brother, *
who casts no slur on his neighbour,
who holds the godless in disdain, *
but honours those who fear the Lord;
he who keeps his pledge, come what may;
who takes no interest on a loan *
and accepts no bribes against the innocent.**

answer
(cultic law)

A/. Such a man will stand firm for ever. *

profession of faith

Through the Founder the Lord gathered us into one religious family that the church, the new brotherhood in union with Christ, may be made present to non-Christians. As a family, we share all: faith, mission commitment, hopes, joys, concerns, spiritual and material goods. Those entrusted with authority within the family are primarily signs and agents of communion.

Constitutions, 35

We are, indeed, to love God above everything else. In our hearts we are also required to nurture a love for self, and our brothers - especially for all who are members of our religious family and share our common life, in areas such as our struggles, our strengths and weaknesses, our way of working, and all else in the hope that one day we may eventually partake of the same heavenly reward. There is no room for doubt about this important commandment to love. *“This commandment was given by God”, says the beloved disciple, “that the one who loves God love his brother as well.”*

“How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity”! May the Lord grant that our members may always reflect a like comforting image. This will indeed happen if the love of Christ - so well described by the Apostle of the gentiles - governs our relationships and forges our members into a single family where all are of one mind and one soul.

Testament Letter, 9

Prayer

P/. Lord, our God, you call blessed those who are called to share the banquet in your kingdom. We give you thanks because today you have invited us once again as guests in your tent and you have called us to dwell on your holy mountain; grant that our actions be a strong witness of the faith we profess.
Through our Lord ...

CANTICLE FROM COLOSSIANS 1, 3,12-20 "Jesus Christ the firstborn of all creation"

The God of the Bible is our source of optimism bringing new life: He is a God who liberates (v. 13). He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to " the kingdom of his beloved Son " (v. 13). We have been freed from the imprisonment of sin and have entered the kingdom of glory (v: 14). He gives us immediately the certainty of victory making us share in the inheritance promised to his people. The believer is a determined optimist, because he can see the hand of God at work in Jesus.

A/. *Let us give thanks to the Father, ** *profession of faith*
who has qualified us to share
in the inheritance of the saints in light.

He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness *
and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
in whom we have redemption, *
the forgiveness of sins.

1C/. He is the image of the invisible God, * *Christ mediator*
the firstborn of all creation, *of creation*
for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth,*
visible and invisible.

All things were created *
through him and for him.
He is before all things, *
and in him all things hold together.

2C/. He is the head of the body, the Church * *mediator*
he is the beginning, *of redemption*
the firstborn from the dead, *
that in everything he might be pre-eminent.

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, *
and through him to reconcile to himself all things,
whether on earth or in heaven, *
making peace by the blood of his cross.

Christ, who offers himself as victim in the Eucharist, is the foundation stone for our communities and apostolic ministry. Consequently, our active and meaningful participation in the daily Eucharist demands that we identify with the life/death mystery of the altar by dedicating ourselves completely to the service of others. The Lord's Eucharistic presence invites us to adoration and to intimate union with Him.

Constitutions, 46

When you consider that the true characteristic of the followers of Christ is love, missionaries should ever demonstrate real mutual affection, assist one another in need, comfort each other in moments of trial. Should it prove necessary, they may make use of fraternal correction while bearing in mind the gospel admonition, "but keep it between the two of you" (Mt 18, 15). They should also be careful to avoid anything that might infringe upon or upset harmony and peace.

Foundation Rule, 46

Prayer

P/. God our Father, we give you thanks that, when we were still sinners you had already reconciled us with you through the death of your beloved Son, and transferred us from the dominion of darkness to the kingdom of your unending light; we praise you and we bless you, because you have already enabled us to share in the inheritance of your saints, while we await for the day when we will enter into your heavenly to be with you forever.
Through Christ our Lord.

READING

1 Cor 10, 15-17

There is only one bread and we form a single body

R/. I say to you as sensible people: judge for yourselves what I am saying. The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ. The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf.

RESPONSORY

- V/.** True friend of your brothers, * pray for your people.
- R/.** True friend of your brothers, * pray for your people.
- V/.** You have given your life for your brothers
- R/.** Pray for your people.
- V/.** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
- R/.** True friend of your brothers, * pray for your people.

MAGNIFICAT

Antiphon: I give you thanks, o Christ, the good shepherd, for guiding me to your glory: let the sheep you have entrusted to me be with me in your kingdom.

INTERCESSIONS

P/. The Spirit of the Lord, ever present in the Church, constantly reminds her of her mission to the world. This inspired Blessed Guido Maria Conforti to give of himself for the evangelization of non Christians and to gather into a missionary community people called to consecrate their lives to God in the pursuit of this ideal. Let us pray that the Spirit will continue to shed His light and guide the Church in announcing the Kingdom of God as we say:

A/. *Your kingdom come, o Lord.*

Or:

A/. *Your kingdom come, o Lord, let all the peoples praise you.*

G/. We pray that we may live our life side by side with people, walking together to become free, to work for justice and peace, waiting attentively for God to become all in all: we pray to the Lord.

G/. We pray that “every missionary consider himself a voluntary victim for the conversion of non-Christians and value his modest contribution to the work of Christ for the salvation of the world as his greatest glory”: we pray to the Lord.

FR 9

G/. We pray that all of us “ should never neglect the ordinary means to maintain and nourish the interior life which empowers us to think, judge, love, suffer, work with Jesus Christ, in Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ”: we pray to the Lord.*FR 18*

G/. We pray that “ considering that the true characteristic of the followers of Christ is love, we may always demonstrate real mutual affection, assist one another in need, comfort each other in moments of trial, support each other with fraternal correction, and always take care to avoid anything which might infringe upon or upset harmony and peace” : we pray to the Lord. *FR 46*

G/. We pray that those Xaverians still in formation “ always remember that they are preparing to embrace religious life and strive to reach the goals of that calling”: we pray to the Lord. *FR 61*

G/. We pray that Xaverians scattered throughout the world may remain united in heart and soul and imitate their Founder in their effort to live holy lives, devoted solely to the coming of the kingdom of Christ: we pray to the Lord.

Other Intentions

P/. Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

A/. Our Father ...

P/. O God, who through the contemplation of the Cross imprinted on the heart of Blessed Bishop Guido, the faithful and wise shepherd in your Church and the Founder of our missionary family, a deep love for the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations, grant that through his intercession, we too may be filled with the same love of Christ enabling us to constantly seek the salvation of all our brothers and sisters. Through our Lord ...

A/. Amen.

CONCLUSION

Ordinary Time IV

P/. May the God of all consolation bless you in every way and grant you peace all the days of your life.

A/. Amen.

P/. May he free you from all worry and strengthen your hearts in His love.

A/. Amen.

P/. May He enrich you with his gifts of faith, hope, and love, so that what you do in this life will bring you to the happiness of eternal life.

A/. Amen.

P/. May almighty God bless you, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

A/. Amen.

NINE FORMATS OF PRAYER

to foster a Xaverian spirituality or to remember and celebrate the memory of Blessed Guido Maria Conforti

The Church does not pray directly to the Saints, at least in its official prayer, but rather prays with them; the Church praises and prays to the Lord in deep communion with the "heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb 12, 22). At most the Church will ask the saints to pray and intercede for us. This is the meaning behind the Litany of the Saints, which the Church sings in the most solemn moments of its celebrations, as during the Easter Vigil.

Let us pray then "with" Blessed Conforti, whom the Church has given us as a gift.

- We will do so, first of all, by listening to the Word of God and allowing that Word to enlighten us. That word was the constant guide and nourishment of the Bishop of Parma, the Founder of the Xaverian Missionaries.*
- We will respond to the Word with the prayer of the Psalms, which the Spirit entrusted to the People of God.*
- We will then listen to extracts from the spiritual teaching of Guido Maria Conforti, especially from his addresses to departing missionaries.*
- We will entrust ourselves to his intercession for the needs of the Church and of the world, and also for our own needs and those of our families.*
- Finally, a specific task will be suggested, since a true devotion to the saints leads to an imitation of them.*

Nine specific themes have been singled out, all taken from the biblical richness of Conforti. They offer us a wide, though incomplete, picture of his spirituality.

A THEME FOR EACH DAY

First Day:	Spirit of Faith <i>"To see, love and seek God in all"</i>
Second Day:	Centrality of Christ <i>"In omnibus Christus" (Col 3, 11)</i>
Third Day:	Cross and Mission <i>"When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all to myself" (Jn 12, 32)</i>
Fourth Day:	Passion for the Gospel <i>"Caritas Christi urget nos" (2 Cor 5, 14)</i>
Fifth Day:	To suffer for the kingdom <i>"In all our trouble my joy is overflowing" (2 Cor 7, 4)</i>
Sixth Day:	Universal Mission <i>"Make disciples of all the nations" (Mt 28, 19)</i>
Seventh Day:	Make one family of the whole world <i>"Jesus was to die... to gather together the scattered children of God" (Jn 11, 52)</i>
Eighth Day:	Family spirit <i>"United heart and soul" (Ac 4, 32)</i>
Ninth Day:	Open to the world <i>"Fill your minds with everything that is true" (Ph 4, 8-9)</i>

OUTLINE OF PRAYER FOR EACH DAY

- Theme
- Introductory comments
- Word of God
- Psalm
- Reading from Conforti's writings
- Prayer
- Suggestions

First Day

SPIRIT OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION

Blessed Guido Maria Conforti was a man of deep faith. He made faith the ruling factor of his life, and in all his decisions he was inspired by it. His driving force was embodied in the desire to share his faith with those who did not know the Gospel or had forgotten it. Towards the end of his life as a Bishop and Founder of a missionary society, he prayed : "Dear Lord, preserve the faith of my people". The unique sentence he carved to express in a few words the pattern of faith of his whole life was: "To see, to love and to seek God in everything".

WORD OF GOD

Heb 11,1-3.6.8-10

Only faith can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen. It was for faith that our ancestors were commended. It is by faith that we understand that the world was created by one word from God, so that no apparent cause can account for the things we can see.

It is impossible to please God without faith, since anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and rewards those who try to find him.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going. By faith he arrived, as a foreigner, in the Promised Land, and lived there as if in a strange country, with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. They lived there in tents while he looked forward to a city founded, designed and built by God.

FROM PSALM 26

1.4.7-9a.13-14

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?
There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,

to behold his temple.
 O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
 have mercy and answer.
 Of you my heart has spoken: "Seek his face."
 It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
 hide not your face.
 I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
 in the land of the living.
 Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
 Hope in the Lord!

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

God is our beginning and our ultimate goal, and this is the reason why we must aspire to him with all our being. Our intellect was given to us in order to know, our heart in order to love, our will in order to act. Our purpose then for being in this world is to know, to love and to serve God.

Anyone therefore, who would like to reflect from this angle as to what christian perfection is, and to make a decision which would embrace all the decisions one could possibly make, need only determine to fix his mind on a desire to see God, to love God, and to seek God in everything. (PP pag. 29)

PRAYER

O Lord our God, we give you thanks,
 because in Blessed Guido Maria
 you have given us a bright example
 of one who follows your Word.
 Grant that we too may be able
 to see you, to love you, and to seek you
 in everything and above everything,
 that we may share one day
 your everlasting happiness.
 Through his intercession
 we ask you to grant our petition ...

SUGGESTION

I will try during the course of the day to fix my mind on the presence of God in my life.

Second Day

CENTRALITY OF CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

The spirituality of Guido Maria Conforti shows a well-defined christological dimension. He deeply loved Jesus Christ, he imitated him in his life of shepherd and father of missionaries. To all he met, he proclaimed through his word and the witness of his life, the mystery and the power of the person of Jesus.

"In omnibus Christus - Christ is everything and he is in everything" : was his episcopal motto.

WORD OF GOD

Col 3, 11; Gal 2, 20; Ph 1, 21; Col 3,3

There is no room for distinction between Greek and Jew, between the circumcised or the uncircumcised, or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and free man. There is only Christ: he is everything and he is in everything.

I have been crucified with Christ, and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in this body I live in faith: faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake.

Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more.

You have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God.

FROM PSALM 33

2-7.12.15

I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad.

Glorify the Lord with me.
Together let us praise his name.
I sought the Lord and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
This poor man called; the Lord heard him
and rescued him from all his distress.

Come, children, and hear me
that I may teach you the fear of the Lord.
Turn aside from evil and do good;
seek and strive after peace.

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

I will come as one sharing the mysteries of God, one who proclaims that word of life which on the lips of the Apostles renewed the face of the earth, one who wishes you to know and love our Lord Jesus Christ, because this is the real purpose of the life of the spirit, which we need to constantly nourish - to know God and his Divine Word, whom He has sent, in whom alone we can expect salvation.

For this reason my guiding sentence will always be the one I chose for my episcopal coat of arms: "Christ is everything and He is in everything". Yes, my dearest children, in all that we do we must keep Christ as our goal, and we must try to please Him, since He is the source and reason of all that is good for us, both in the realm of nature and the realm of grace. Without the action of His life-giving spirit mankind would fall back into the abyss of disasters and of material and moral upheaval from which Christ redeemed it through His infinite love.

What would in fact be our fate without the redeeming action of Christ? (*Pastoral Letter on his arrival as Bishop of Ravenna*).

PRAYER

All powerful and ever living God,
you have revealed everything and given us everything
in Jesus, your Son,
and in the person of Blessed Guido Maria
you have shown us the image of the Good Shepherd,
grant that we may always keep Christ in our mind
and that in everything we do we may draw inspiration from Him,
so that our actions
may be the manifestation of the life of Christ in us.
Through the mediation of Jesus
and by the intercession of Guido Maria Conforti
grant us, o Lord, the favour we pray for ...

SUGGESTION

My task today is to read a page of the Gospel in order to understand better Jesus, my Lord.

THE CROSS AND MISSION

INTRODUCTION

Those who were familiar with Bishop Conforti know it well: the encounter with the Man of the Cross left a deep impression on Guido Maria Conforti from the time he was still a boy. "I stared at Him, He looked back at me, and it seemed as if He was telling me many things". Conforti discovered his vocation through the Crucifix; from the contemplation of the Cross he found the courage to face the difficulties of life. The goal and ideal of his life was to spread the knowledge and the love of the Crucified God. To meditate on the Cross so as to find healing and become witnesses of the Gospel is the task Blessed Conforti entrusted to us.

WORD OF GOD

Jn 3, 14; Jn 12, 32; Jn 19, 32; Rv 1,7

The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.

When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.

And again, in another place scripture says:

"They will look on the one whom they have pierced".

It is he who is coming on the clouds; everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the races of the earth will mourn over him.

FROM PSALM 21

2-3.7-9.23.25a.28-29

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress.
O my God, I call by day and you give no reply;
I call by night and I find no peace.

But I am a worm and no man,
scorned by men, despised by the people.
All who see me deride me.

They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend.

I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled,
for he has never despised
nor scorned the poverty of the poor.

All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord,
all families of the nations worship before him
for the kingdom is the Lord's; he is ruler of the nations.

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

Your mission and your programme of life are beautifully drawn up in the Crucifix, which I have just handed over to you and you have placed with joy on your heart. It seems to me that through this Image He is speaking to you in those same words he addressed to his Apostles and to the crowds two thousand years ago, as proof of the divinity of his mission: "When I am lifted up from the earth, on the Cross, I shall draw all things to myself".

In these few words we find the reason of His mission and the secret of its victories. And the mission of Christ becomes also your own mission, the secret of its victories must be the secret of your own successes: the Cross, the sacrifice of yourselves.

Jesus Christ wants to draw all peoples to Himself, because He wants to reign over the minds of all with His divine teaching, and over the hearts of all with His love.

And you have been called to gather round the throne and See of His Cross all peoples, so that they may be able to recognize His rule, to accept His teachings, and to taste the ripe fruits of that love which He sealed with His divine blood. (DP 16)

PRAYER

O God, our Father,
you granted Blessed Guido Maria
a special experience of Christ Crucified,
and want all men to be saved:
Grant that we too,
in a very personal and intimate manner,
may contemplate the Cross of your Son
and come to an understanding of the immensity of your love.
Through the power of your Redemption
and the intercession of Blessed Bishop Conforti
grant us the favour, Lord, we ask of you ...

SUGGESTION

I will spend a few moments today looking with love at the Cross of Jesus in my home.

Fourth Day

PASSION FOR THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION

"The love of Christ overwhelms us" is the key sentence that established the programme of life of Bishop Conforti, it is the motto he entrusted to the Xaverian Congregation. He felt within himself the unshakeable pull of the love of Christ, which drove him to spend his life for the Gospel. Anyone who has encountered and contemplated this Crucified Love burns with the desire to make it known and to share it with everybody. This is the meaning of Mission.

WORD OF GOD

2Cor 5, 14-15.18; 1Cor 9, 16

The love of Christ overwhelms us when we reflect that if one man has died for all, then all men should be dead; and the reason he died for all was so that living men should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised to life for them. ... It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ ... and has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled.

Not that I do boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it!

FROM PSALM 39

5b-11

How many, O Lord my God,
are the wonders and designs
that you have worked for us;
you have no equal.
Should I proclaim and speak of them,
they are more than I can tell !
You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings,
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim.
Instead, here am I.
In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will,
My God, I delight in your law
in the depth of my heart.
Your justice I have proclaimed in the great assembly.
My lips I have not sealed; you know it, O Lord.
I have not hidden your justice in my heart

but declared your faithful help.
I have not hidden your love and your truth
from the great assembly.

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

The love of Jesus Christ is your motivation for making this great sacrifice. Today you stated why you are doing it: *"The love of Christ overwhelms us"*. The example of the One who gave Himself up completely for our sake is your inspiration: *"He gave himself up for us"* and this same Person has left us a commandment to love our brothers in the same way He loved us: *"As I loved you"* (DP 19).

How I hope that during your life you will tell us of the large number of people brought to the faith, of Churches you built, of schools you have established, of hospitals, of homes, of kindergardens you have opened, of the many and varied projects which the love of Christ will inspire you to become involved in. It is for this purpose, and for this purpose alone, that you are going to other lands. You are not driven by a desire for fame, by greed to amass wealth, by a fixation to visit new countries, or to encounter new people or become acquainted with different customs. *"The love of Christ overwhelms us"*: this is the motivation of your life; all your desires and goals expressed in one sentence. Your aim must be to gain everybody for Christ with the power of persuasion and the lure of love. (DP 22).

PRAYER

O God, who by the contemplation of the Cross
which imprinted on the heart of Blessed Bishop Conforti,
Founder of our Society,
love for the proclamation of the Gospel to all nations,
grant that by his intercession,
we too may be filled by the same love of Christ
to constantly seek the salvation
of all our brothers and sisters.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Through his intercession
Grant us, o Lord, the grace
We ask for

SUGGESTION

Looking at the Cross of Jesus, I pray for all Missionaries, and I entrust to the Lord in a special way the ones I know personally ...

TO SUFFER FOR THE KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

Suffering plays an integral part in the life of Guido Maria Conforti, from the sickness experienced when still very young to the trials during the last few years of his life.

The founding of a new missionary family, the leadership of a local church during difficult times, made great demands on him and caused him deep suffering. He faced his trials supported by an unshakeable trust in the Lord. The law of the grain of wheat is applicable to his life too: life springs forth from death.

This is the true miracle of love.

WORD OF GOD

2Cor 7, 4-6; Jn 12, 24-25; Ac 14, 22

I have the very greatest confidence in you, and I am so proud of you that in all our trouble I am filled with consolation and my joy is overflowing.

... There was no rest for this body of ours. Far from it; we found trouble on all sides: quarrels outside, misgivings inside. But God comforts the miserable, and he comforted us.

I tell you, most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life.

They put fresh heart into the disciples, encouraging them to persevere in the faith. We all have to experience many hardships, they said, before we enter the kingdom of God.

FROM PSALM 125

The heathens themselves said: "What marvels the Lord worked for them!"

What marvels the Lord worked for us!

Indeed we were glad.

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing:

they come back, they come back, full of song,

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

Let nothing upset you, nothing cause you to be afraid. Let the crucifix which you carry around your neck comfort you; that crucifix must be your joy, your every-

thing. And from the One who shed his blood down to the last drop in order to ransom us, learn to sacrifice yourselves for your brothers.

God's grace, which will always be with you, will comfort you. That grace enables us to do anything and will act as a reminder to us in the midst of the worst trials: "Superabundo gaudio in omni afflictione mea" (DP 2).

PRAYER

O God, through the passion and death of your Son
you redeemed the world
and allowed Blessed Guido Maria
to experience many trials
while keeping steadfast his trust in you.
Grant that we too
may face with courage the trials of life
and take part in the spreading of your Kingdom
Through Christ our Lord.

SUGGESTION

I want to offer to God the difficulties, small and great, of my day for the coming of God's kingdom in the world.

UNIVERSAL MISSION

INTRODUCTION

The Gospel has a universal dimension, it is meant for all nations. From the time he was a boy Guido Maria Conforti felt a strong desire to consecrate his life to the ideal of mission. When he was thirty years old he succeeded in the realization of his "audacious project" to found a new missionary congregation, convinced that faith becomes stronger when one makes a free gift of it. He teaches us to give generously of our energies to the service of the gospel in order to make our world a more humane environment.

WORD OF GOD

Mt 28, 16-20

Meanwhile the eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."

FROM PSALM 116

O praise the Lord, all you nations,
acclaim him, all you people!
Strong is his love for us;
he is faithful for ever.

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

The plans of God, plans of goodness and of love for man, must not, and cannot fail and for this reason Jesus Christ, before going up to heaven, left behind, people here on earth to share His own power and authority, and He entrusted them with the command to continue the great work He had begun.

These people are called by Him in special way: - at times he calls them 'His dear ones', 'His chosen ones'; at other times he calls them 'brothers and friends' - His closest friends in whom He confides. But even that is not enough: now He calls them to share His trials and become His co-workers in His divine mission. Sometimes, using an expression full of deep meaning He calls them 'salt of the earth' and 'light of the world', and still, as if all this were not enough, He goes as far as to tell them: "As the Father has given me all authority and power, I now give them to you;

go and teach all nations, teach them everything I have taught you; teach them to observe all the commands I gave you", and as if to identify them with Himself adds : "Anyone who listens to you, listens to me; anyone who rejects you, rejects me."
(Address at the Consecration of Bishop Calza, 12 April 1912)

PRAYER

O Lord, our God, you want all people to be saved
and be able to enjoy the knowledge of your truth.
You have enriched your Church with a new missionary family
through your servant Blessed Guido Maria Conforti.
Increase the drive of your people
so that the Gospel may spread throughout the world.
May the work of your missionaries
be fruitful for the good of all mankind.
Grant us, Lord, the grace for which we beseech you ...

SUGGESTION

I will take steps to remain well informed about the problems relating to mission in the world.

Seventh Day

MAKE ONE FAMILY OF THE WHOLE WORLD

INTRODUCTION

The Gospel is a proclamation of peace and reconciliation among the nations. The Word of God gave birth to the Church, which is the sign of a new way of relating to one another in Christ, and is commissioned to unite people with no regard to race or culture. Guido Maria Conforti understood that mission fully as a means of serving the cause of unity and peace in the world. For this reason he was determined to make his contribution towards the realization of Christ's desire and the plan to make humankind into a single family.

WORD OF GOD

Jn 12, 51-52; Jn 17, 20-21; Ep 4, 5-6

Jesus was to die for the nation - and not for the nation only, but to gather together in unity the scattered children of God.

I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, over all, through all and within all.

FROM PSALM 121

I rejoiced when I heard them say:
let us go to God's house.
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is built as a city
strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.
For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgment
of the house of David.
For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
"Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!

For love of my brethren and friends
I say: "Peace upon you!"
For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good.

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

We are told in the Gospel that, one day our Lord Jesus Christ looked over at the small group of followers surrounding him and told them: " And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well. They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, and one shepherd".

These words of our Divine Saviour, so full of concern, showing his concern for the salvation of souls, found a response in generous souls who declared themselves ready and willing to obey the divine call. (DP 14)

And this is the biggest challenge which we must face with urgency, because all peoples have the right to redemption. Jesus Christ stated that He was determined to lead all His sheep to the fold, and these sheep are scattered all over the face of the earth; His salvation is meant not for one or another specific people, not for one or another specific nation, but for the whole world. (DP 6)

PRAYER

O Lord, our God,
thanks to the proclamation of the Gospel,
your Church fosters brotherhood and peace among the nations.
Through your servant,
Blessed Guido Maria,
you have established in the Church a new family
at the service of humankind.
Grant that your Word become an integral part
of different cultures in the world
bringing unity and peace.
Remember us in a special way
who are in need of your grace

SUGGESTION

I want to make the effort today to welcome all those who are different from me and spend time in listening to them in order to widen my own vision of things.

FAMILY SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION

Our response to Jesus makes us members of a new family, the Church, which itself is the community of the “new commandment”, the community of reciprocal love. “The love of Christ has brought us together” believers sing.

A strong community life is already by itself a witness to Christ and to the Gospel. Bishop Conforti appealed to his missionaries to “be missionaries together”, he passed on to them the need to have an “unshakeable charity” towards the family they are members of, a reciprocal love which must be genuine and generous in supporting each other’s endeavour to be faithful and as a witness to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

WORD OF GOD

Ac 4, 32-35

The whole group of believers was *united, heart and soul*; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common.

The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all given great respect.

None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from them, to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any members who might be in need.

FROM PSALM 132

How good and how pleasant it is,
when brothers live in unity!

It is like precious oil upon the head
running down upon the beard,
running down upon Aaron’s beard
upon the collar of his robes.

It is like the dew of Hermon which falls
on the heights of Sion.

For there the Lord gives his blessing,
life for ever.

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

Love, above all, one another; let this love bring you ever closer to one another, so that you may be united heart and soul in such a way that your joys and sorrows will be shared by all. You will then gain an invincible strength, against which all your enemies' efforts will fail. (DP 17)

Yes, go and preach the universal brotherhood proclaimed by Christ, whose goal it is to break down all barriers and to make of mankind, without usurping different nationalities and their specific values, one single great family, united by the common seal of Christian charity. (DP 12)

PRAYER

Father of all mankind,
you have gathered around you in Jesus, your Beloved Son,
a multitude of sons and daughters,
grant that your Church preserve the unity of spirit
which is a pledge of peace.
Grant that we, by the example of Blessed Guido Maria,
always search for what unites us
rather than what divides us,
so that we may witness to the world
the coming of your kingdom.
Through the intercession of your faithful servant,
we entrust to you the request which is dear to us ...

SUGGESTION

In all my dealings with others today I will make an effort to foster harmony and peace.

OPEN TO THE WORLD

INTRODUCTION

To be missionaries implies not only to give, but also to receive. That is why mission demands an opening of one's horizons, to be able to discern the "seed of the Word" sown throughout the whole field encompassed by humanity. Acceptance of the Gospel purifies and raises human cultures on a higher level. Bishop Conforti stressed that his missionaries must possess a well established cultural background, and an adaptability of mind and heart so as to be able to sow deeply Christ's message deep inside the heart of people.

As a person he gave us an example of one ready to accept new and worthy ideas, through mutual discussions, sincerely entered into, so as to keep himself up to date with events around him.

WORD OF GOD

Ac 17, 23b; Ph 4, 4-7

I proclaim the one whom you already worship without knowing it.
Finally, brothers, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Keep doing all the things that you learnt from me and have been taught by me and have heard or seen that I do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

FROM PSALM 8

How great is your name, O Lord our God,
through all the earth!

Your majesty is praised above the heavens;
on the lips of children and of babes
you have found praise to foil your enemy,
to silence the foe and the rebel.

When I see the heavens, the work of your hands,
the moon and the stars which you arranged,
what is man that you should keep him in mind,
mortal man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him little less than a god;
with glory and honour you crowned him,
gave him power over the works of your hand,
put all things under his feet ...

How great is your name, O Lord our God,
through all the earth!

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF BISHOP CONFORTI

Missionary candidates should possess a suitable intellectual ability, good judgment, sound physical health, a temperament which is consistent and easy to get along with, and above all a concern for personal sanctification and the salvation of souls. Our young students should be convinced that the Society is not limited to the contemplative life, but that it is an active congregation dedicated to the proclamation of the kingdom of Christ. As a result they should possess a diversified and uncommon formation ...

It would be good for students to compete with each other in their studies in such a way that each one might share his acquired knowledge and spirituality with others ... with humility and without resentment and jealousy. Every house of the Society should maintain a well furnished library, containing updated books in sacred and profane sciences, books of pre-eminent writers of the past and better known moderate authors of the present.

An ethnographic museum, which contains interesting artifacts from various mission areas as regards customs, art, religion, flora and fauna, may prove useful in furthering the requisite cultural preparation of the missionary. It would be well then if each missionary, without compromising his ministry and professed poverty, would send some artifacts to enhance the various collections of the Society which may eventually be placed at the service of all.

As efforts are made to choose a general programme of work and study, whilst keeping the doors open to other possibilities, it is worth keeping in mind the words of St Paul to the Philippians (4,8). (Foundation Rule 52-60, *passim*).

PRAYER

Grant to us also, Lord,
that openness of spirit and wisdom of the heart
with which you endowed your servant, Blessed Guido Maria.
Grant that your Church may be able to discern the signs of the times
and so resist what is contrary to the Gospel
upholding the action of your Spirit in the heart of people.
Through the intercession of your faithful servant,
grant us the requests we submit to you ...

SUGGESTION

I want to become more aware of the problems in the world, so that they may become a springboard for my life of prayer and help me to find concrete ways of becoming involved.

TRADITIONAL XAVERIAN PRAYERS

P/. Let us pray, dear brothers,
to our Lord Jesus Christ,
present in the mystery of the bread here in front of us,
that He may send more labourers into his harvest,
look after those who are already working there
and always bless our humble family (ies)
granting each of us the gift of perseverance.

P/. Let us pray that Jesus may send more labourers to his vineyard.

1/. O Jesus, you died for the salvation of all and founded your Church to continue on earth your work of redemption, multiply, we beseech you, the number of those who proclaim your Gospel. Increase their zeal, sanctify their endeavours, so that those who are still without the gift of faith, may soon come to know you and love you here on earth and be happy with you in heaven for ever and ever.

You who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end.

A/. Amen.

P/. Let us pray that Jesus may reward the efforts of those who proclaim the Gospel.

2/. O Jesus, you are the alpha and omega of our life, who wanted love to be the distinctive mark of your disciples. We commend to you our brothers (sisters) who proclaim your Gospel throughout the world.

Give them the grace of fortitude in their hardships, defend them from dangers, and make them worthy to endeavour and suffer for the glory of your name.

Grant, through the intercession of St Francis Xavier, that we too may take part in their sufferings and their merits so that we may enter with them into your everlasting glory. You who live and reign for ever and ever.

A/. Amen.

P/. Let us pray that Jesus grant us the gift of perseverance and bless our humble Congregation (s).

3/. O God of goodness and love, you want all people to be saved. Grant us, we beseech you, the gift of final perseverance. Make us faithful to your grace, so that we may reach the perfection that you want from us.

We ask you this through the merit of the death and resurrection of your Son, by the love you show us in the Eucharist and through the merits of Mary, our Mother.

You who live and reign for ever and ever.

A/. Amen.

P/. For our benefactors

4/. Lord Jesus, you taught us not to worry about our life, but to trust in our heavenly Father, who feeds the birds of the air and clothes the flowers of the field.

We recommend to you all the needs of our missionary family (ies).

While remembering the benefits received from so many generous people, inspired by you to assist us, we ask you to grant them the abundance of your blessings.

Reward them, Lord, with the gift of eternal life and grant them your blessing and peace.

A/. Amen.

Spontaneous prayers

P/. O God, our Father, you have given us in Christ, your living Word,

the model of the new Man,

grant that your Holy Spirit may inspire us

so that we not only listen to the Gospel

but also act upon it

so that the whole world may know you and glorify your name.

Through Christ our Lord.

A/. Amen.

INDEX

<i>Brief historical outline</i>	3
<i>CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST</i>	5
<i>LITURGY OF THE HOURS</i>	
<i>Office of Readings</i>	11
<i>Vigil Celebration</i>	14
<i>Morning Prayer</i>	19
<i>Evening Prayer</i>	27
<i>Nine formats of prayer</i>	34
<i>Spirit of faith</i>	36
<i>Centrality of Christ</i>	38
<i>Cross and mission</i>	40
<i>Passion for the Gospel</i>	42
<i>Suffering for the Kingdom</i>	44
<i>Universal mission</i>	46
<i>Make one family of the whole world</i>	48
<i>Family spirit</i>	50
<i>Openness to the world</i>	52
<i>Traditional Xaverian prayers</i>	54