

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CMSWR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
WITH HEARTS AFLAME: WOMEN RELIGIOUS AS EUCHARISTIC MISSIONARIES
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
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“Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?” (*Lk 24:32*)

Dear Sisters, with hearts aflame from your encounter with the risen Christ, you want to be Eucharistic missionaries, just like those two disciples who encountered the Lord on the road to Emmaus.

What made them Eucharistic missionaries? It was the realization that Christ was alive! He was alive when he walked and talked with them. He was alive when he broke bread with them. And even when he vanished from their sight, he was still alive in their hearts. They didn’t need him to walk with them back to Jerusalem; they hurried back to tell their friends that Christ was alive! They did this because they had experienced the Resurrection, not merely as an event that occurred outside themselves, but rather, as something that changed their own hearts. Christ now lived in them, and so they too were resurrected.

This, dear Sisters, is the truth that we need to be re-awakened to each day: that Jesus is risen! He is risen in the Eucharist. He is risen and alive in the Church, the people of God. He is alive in our world.

To live as “Eucharistic missionaries” is to see how Jesus is alive today, and to look where he is leading us. This means an openness to daily conversion. It will mean subjecting our own plans to the mission that Christ is leading. It means being a disciple of the true, risen Christ – not an idea of Christ who is frozen in time, or whom we put on our shelf like a collector’s item or a museum piece. To be a follower of the real, risen Christ may mean that we have to change our plans, because the world has changed. In responding to the reality of the today’s world, we should not retreat out of fear, nor simply “go back” to the way things were before. On the

contrary, Sisters: this is your time to shine! To shine with the light that comes from that fire in your hearts: the living and loving encounter with Christ who first called you to be his chosen bride, and who still calls you to share His love with others. Do not be afraid!

As superiors of your communities, do not be afraid of what change and adaptation may mean for your institutes: for the rules of formation; for the care that is needed for your own Sisters; and for the apostolates that you will, or will not, engage in. What matters – and you know this better than anyone – is that the love of Christ continue to burn in your hearts. What matters is that the Christ whom you follow is the true Christ, the living Christ, the risen Christ: the One who continues to lead us on the way of mission for today.

If a Eucharistic procession is symbolic of anything, it signifies the fact that we are still journeying forward on a path through history, and that our hope lies in following him wherever he leads. Loving you as tenderly, as deeply, and as steadfastly as he does, dear Sisters, what do you have to fear?

Therefore, I encourage you, in the name of the Holy Father and together with him: Keep the flame of Christ's love burning in your hearts. And be trusting missionaries of his living and risen presence. This will be a great way to live the hope to which we are all called during the coming Jubilee Year.

May your days of assembly not only provide shared wisdom for your mission, but also may they be a time of deep communion in love and in joy.

God bless you all!