

Opening of the General Assembly

Robert P. Maloney
Superior General

My brothers, welcome to Rome and to this 39th General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission.

First, let me thank you who are here today – the Visitors, the delegates, the members of the General Curia. If the Congregation is faithful in serving the poor and the clergy today, it is because of you, its members.

Notice the motto for the first week of this Assembly: "To announce a year of favor from the Lord" (Lk 4:19). This motto describes the objective of this Assembly. We come together to proclaim the good news of the Lord's love for his people, especially the poor.

As we begin this Assembly, Article 137 of our Constitutions reminds us of a very important fact: we gathered together in this hall represent the entire Congregation and, during these four weeks, *we together* are its supreme authority. Not I. We, together. So I express to you, the representatives of the entire Congregation, the gratitude I feel for all that the Company is doing as a servant of the poor and the clergy, and I encourage you, the supreme authority in the Congregation, to hold up before the entire Company clear, creative challenges that will help it to continue to grow in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of those who have worked so hard at preparing the Assembly, in particular the members of the Preparatory Commission: Frs. Corpus Juan Delgado, Alvaro Quevedo, Bernard Quinn, Serafín Peralta and Zeracristos Yosief and our in-house preparatory committee: Frs. Lauro Palú, Emeric Amyot d'Inville and Patrick Griffin. Our two facilitators, Sr. Germaine Price and Fr. Serafín Peralta worked closely with both committees and will continue to aid us during the Assembly. I would also like to express my gratitude to those who have accepted to serve as Moderators: Frs. Joseph Levesque, Christian Sens and Jaime Corera and as ad hoc Secretary, Giuseppe Turati. There are many others who will be helping us in the course of this Assembly, but I will have another occasion to thank all of them.

I will have the opportunity to speak with you at some length tomorrow, so for today's agenda, I present to you Fr. Joseph Levesque, who very generously accepted my invitation to be the moderator this first day and who will assist us through some of the initial steps in the opening of this Assembly.