

April – May 2020

“FRATER PRESSES THE RESET BUTTON”

The beginning of FRATER is marked by the traumatic experience of the Second World War as lived by Father François. The hospital of Verdun was the scene of human suffering and also of the courage of its chaplain who, supported by the strength of the Holy Spirit, gave impetus to the apostolic movement in which we have found so much life and hope.



Covid-19 and loneliness. The desolation of the France in 1945 is now the desolation of the five continents. In a few months we have seen many of the apparent securities on which our way of life was based fall. Neither science nor technology has been able to prevent an infinite number of deaths. Hospitals had to reinvent themselves. We dare to imagine the loneliness of professionals and ill people, of their families forced to keep their distance. It's the loneliness of loneliness, the death without mourning and without crying. Confinement has been an imposed experience of solitude. Even though we have been in company, we have felt loneliness and uncertainty. We are aware of our lightness and vulnerability.

Covid-19 and mercy. As it happens in post-war times, there are those who bring out their worst side, but there are also those who bring out their best human side. This is how we are contemplating it in the glow of mercy in the midst of the crisis. We see people risking their own lives to save their neighbors; people who suffer from not being able to treat with human warmth the person in front of them; people who invent and create new channels of listening and accompaniment; neighboring people who until yesterday did not know each other and now wish to engage in conversation. This solitude, forced by health, is an opportunity to rediscover the need for the social and community fabric. Even if we cannot hug or kiss each other, we can look into each other's eyes. See in each one a person, who is not a number, who is not a competitive me. He/she is a face in need of mercy and compassion.

Frater has to reboot. A new time has been opened, it's here. Frater doesn't have to reestablish. The first planting was really vigorous. We are who we are, thanks to the faith and loyalty of those people who sowed. However this time, that we have had to live through this pandemic, forces us to press the reset button. We have to stop and think about how the personal accompaniments will be in the future. We have to glimpse how to strengthen our organization and the functions that allow us communion and evangelization.

This serious world crisis questions us. Who are we? Where are we going? What can we do for others? More questions than answers. More love than law. More joy than despair. As Pope Francis says, we must work together on the plan to rise, imitating the work of those women before the tombstone. They did not let themselves be defeated in the face of adversity. They anticipated the other apostles to announce the good news. Yes, Christ is alive and among us. Nothing and no one can separate us from his love.

The Team-general of Spain