

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

During this month of June, we celebrate solemnities and feasts central to our faith: from the Ascension of the Lord, on the 2nd, to Saints Peter and Paul on the upcoming 29th. All of them, each with its own special tones, give us an opportunity to grow in our thanksgiving to God for his immense love. Consequently, these celebrations invite us to share our joy, including through a more intense family life, both in the centers of the Work and in the homes of the Associates and Supernumeraries.

Although our joy will not be expressed in the same way in every moment and circumstance, we should always be happy, both when we experience what is humanly pleasant and also when we confront suffering. As he said to his apostles, Jesus is saying to all of us: “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (*Jn* 15:11). And Saint Paul exhorts us: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice” (*Phil* 4:4).

Therefore the experience of our own weakness and our sins shouldn’t make us fall into sadness, because, as happened to the prodigal son (cf. *Lk* 15:22-24), authentic joy is born of the certainty that we are always infinitely loved by God, who is preparing for us “a great feast: the deep joy of repentance” (*Letter*, 14 February 1974, no. 7).

In this way we can always be, with Jesus, sowers of peace and joy.

Your Father blesses you with all his affection,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leonardo".

Rome, 14 June 2019