

“The Holy Door of Mercy, a Call to Radicalism”

“We open the Holy Door along with the arms and the heart of that paternity which through an inscrutable divine design was communicated to us by Jesus the Redeemer”¹.

Dearest brothers and sisters of the Calabrian Family,

Peace, joy and love of the merciful Lord be and remain always in our hearts.

By a particular grace in this year of mercy, the Bishop of Verona Msgr. Giuseppe Zenti granted us the favour that the Church of the Mother House of San Zeno in Monte may be a *Holy Door* from September 29 till October 8, during the novena and the liturgical celebration of St. John Calabria.

For the first time in the history, the place so loved by Fr. Calabria who called it *“holy and blessed land”*, becomes the holy door of mercy. It is a moment of providential grace and particular gifts for the whole Calabrian Family and for all the people who will visit our House.

Through this letter I would like to inform you of this extraordinary event. I imagine how Fr. Calabria would rejoice and prepare himself for such an important event for our Opera.

We join the Mother House with our prayer, and share three fundamental concepts:

1. “The Holy Door of Mercy”, a call to evangelical and Calabrian radicalism

The first aspect that we should deepen is the call to radicalism.

In the journey of this triennium we intend to discover our call in the deeper root that is Jesus Christ, the One who makes all our life very meaningful. Every occasion is a reason to open ourselves to his grace, which renews us and causes in us the true joy that cannot be taken away from us. All our daily activities must not take us away from things that are essential in our Christian and consecrated life. The holy door is a moment of grace in which the Lord calls us to a deep conversion.

The danger of superficiality is always at work in our life; these occasions remind us a lively and renewed fidelity to our vocation.

The experience of mercy is an invitation to radicalism because it is an encounter with Jesus Christ, the face of the Father’s mercy, which invites us to look to Him.

We will try, therefore, to live the days of the novena and the liturgical feast of Fr. Calabria as an opportunity for the renewal of our call to holiness. *“Brothers and sisters, this is our time, this is the propitious time, and this is the time of the evangelical and Calabrian radicalism. The cultural and ecclesiastical context in which we live is in need of consecrated Christians, living the Gospel, open to the new poverties and situations of the human life. We are called to live the intimacy with Christ; intimacy that is not closeness or rigidity with fixed principles; but an intimacy that enables us to see the riches of the presence of God the Father, who loves us, accompanies us, and manifests Himself in the history”².*

¹ Fr. Calabria, *“Apostolato Infermi”*, January 1950.

² Fr. Miguel Tofful, *“The Joy of Radicalism”*, Letter to the Calabrian Family, Verona, December 8, 2014, n. 5.

2. Fr. Calabria invites us to renew ourselves, longing for holiness

The second element to keep in mind is the same attitude of St. John Calabria in front of events such as this. The holy year was for him a call to holiness, especially for the members of the Opera, which has been born from Jesus' Holy Side.

Still now his words can help us to resume our life, and live according to this great gift that the Lord has given us by calling us to belong to this Opera, for a particular grace. *"How should we lift up to the Lord our hymn of thanksgiving, since he always laid down his look of love on all and each one of us, in spite of our, of my imperfections and faults; these faults could make the great and divine designs of the Lord our God turn off – the designs that the Lord has on this Opera, born from Christ's divine Side. Moreover, the Lord kept us in his garden that is this Opera, and made use of us as his instruments... Dear and most beloved brothers, let all of us be of one heart and soul; for God's sake, let us take advantage of this new grace that the Lord gives us; I said, and now repeat to you, that for us the members of this House, this is just the holy year, the jubilee year. How many graces the Lord lavishes in the holy year, how many mercies he offers! Dear brothers, if we bear the necessary conditions to get these graces and mercies, which God pours out in the holy year, I feel it firmly, God will give us too, the same graces and eternal mercies, and he will also give us some other particular gift. In the [holy] year, the first condition in order to enjoy the benefits, is to humble ourselves, to ask the Lord for pardon, to make a confession, maybe a general confession, to bury the past and to start a new life. That's why the jubilee, the holy year, has to sign the beginning of our sanctification. Dear brothers, come on, let us do it for God's sake, let us decide it in front of God, the three times holy, considering, I myself first of all, the great graces he has bestowed on us, and the many sins we have committed here, just in his House, while he was benefiting and helping us. [Let us make] a good confession, then, with the promise, a sincere and effective one, to give all our self to the Lord, as he wishes us to do at present, that we should aspire to nothing else but to his glory, to the good of souls and this Opera; and for this [he asks us] to sacrifice our self, our point of view; to be here, as I have repeated to you so many times, as rags and clay, without head. Believe me, my dear, this is the primary condition to develop the divine designs, so that this Congregation of God may be always new, fresh, full of that life which it needs for itself, in order to give it to so many souls"*³.

3. Let us celebrate together the divine mercy

I invite all the members of the Calabrian Family to get together, in various places, in the days in which the holy door of San Zeno in Monte will be open.

In every place there should be a concrete sign of unity and communion, with the celebration of mercy altogether. Certainly the religious communities, the parishes, the activities and the Calabrian groups will not lack creativity to find a moment to celebrate the divine mercy altogether, as a renewal of our life and our faithfulness to the charism. I am sure that the Lord will

³ Fr. Calabria, Conf. Esort. * 2293/S, 1933.

make the graces blossom and give each one of us fruits of holiness, with new rush to follow Jesus, the face of the Father's mercy. Let us share these gifts for the growth of us all. I feel this moment as a true call of the Lord in order to involve us more and more in the spirit and mission of the Opera.

I, in the first person, will turn these holy days into an opportunity for my personal conversion and sanctification. I am also available to meet here in the Mother House those who will approach to celebrate together the Lord's grace and mercy in this holy time.

Dearest brothers and sisters, may the call of the Lord help us to live the joy of radicalism, so that our life may always bear witness to the merciful love of our Father.

I wish you a good preparation and celebration of the feast of St. John Calabria. I greet you and ask you the charity of your prayers. God bless you.

With fraternal love,

Fr. Miguel Tofful

Verona, August 29, 2016