



# MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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## The Easter of Joseph De Piro

*A life given for others*

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12<sup>th</sup> September, 2019

For the Missionary Society of St Paul, the 17<sup>th</sup> of September has always been an important day of remembrance. On this day in 1933 the priest Joseph De Piro made the passage from this world to the Father. He left behind a fledgling community of missionaries too young to carry on the vision they inherited. Many children orphaned by poverty felt orphaned for the second time when their loving father did not return home after celebrating the feast of our Lady of Sorrows. His own family, certainly not unfamiliar with premature deaths, might have put up once again the sleeves of faith to grieve a son and a brother who epitomized their beliefs and values. Friends, close and distant, would have felt that the timing was unfair given the way this man was offering himself for a country on its knees. They saw in him a selfless benefactor who did not discriminate between people and who seemed to have time for everyone.

For Joseph De Piro, leaving this earthly abode was not of great consequence compared to his desire to live well and generously his life as a gift from God. Like his one and only model Jesus, a premature death inaugurated the true meaning of life – that of becoming one with Christ and to enter the real home of the Father.

For us living in communion the missionary spirituality, this day is more than an anniversary. It is the recognition that God has chosen one of our brothers, conferring him a **charism**: a gift of the Spirit by which God, in His wisdom and

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“I FOLLOW YOU WHEREVER YOU GO”

providence, elects specific persons and entrusts them in giving flesh to a spirituality so that others might follow them and taste God's love for all humanity. In 1910 the founder gave birth to a religious missionary community, known today as the Missionary Society of St Paul, to carry on this missionary charism. Today this charism is still maturing as we learn how to witness Christ in the various cultures and the developing contexts of the modern world. The Spirit is alive and creative, and the missionary charism entrusted to Joseph De Piro is finding new ways of manifesting itself in the Church. Various lay brothers and sisters are becoming inspired by this missionary spirituality and are adopting it in their life. We are witnessing various Paulist lay communities who through prayer, liturgy and ministry are evangelizing their environments in the spirit of Joseph De Piro.

What we celebrate on this day is the Easter of our founder, whose passage from death to Life has become a seed sown in the world, which the Lord is allowing to grow into a tree bearing fruit. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, we wish to celebrate the fruit of a **life given for others**, a life that has inspired generations and spread throughout various nations. We would like to invite you to take a look at some aspects of Joseph De Piro's life and to see how today you can also adapt them to bring Christ to humanity. On our part will continue to share various reflections regarding this missionary charism entrusted to this man of God.

May our spiritual father Joseph De Piro be our guide in living the missionary spirituality in our daily life. He is surely interceding for each one of us in the heavenly kingdom, so that like him we become generous witnesses of God's love.

Blessings



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Fr Mark Grima mssp

Superior General

