

Very Reverend Father General:

Through you I am sending my most sincere greetings to the representatives of all the Provinces of the Congregation of Marian Fathers gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima for their Convention.

The topic of your reflection is religious formation. Surely, a recently published document dedicated to this matter by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Associations of Apostolic Life, will be very helpful to you.

On my part, I would like to remind you of the Church's expectations, of which I spoke on the occasion of your General Chapter on June 29, 1987. You, the Marians, must let yourselves be drawn more than before "to the swelling ranks of the new poor of various cultures, so as to be able to respond to their deepest aspirations, their thirst for truth, justice, and love."

Representatives of communities that were forced to lead their religious life in a clandestine manner until recently, will also participate in this Convention. I trust that sharing experiences between them and confreres that enjoyed freedom will prove valuable for both sides. I am particularly thinking about your confreres from Lithuania. I continuously pray for the intentions of their Homeland.

May your Mother and Patroness, Mary Immaculate, sustain you in the work of the continuous perfection of formation, especially of the young generation of religious. May the intercession of your Renovator, Blessed George Matulewicz, and of the Servant of God, Fr. Casimir Wyszyński, whose venerated tomb lies on Portuguese soil, always go together with you.

I ask you to pray for me at the feet of Our Lady of Fatima and I am imparting to all my wholehearted blessing.

Vatican, April 30, 1990