

Rome, 3.12.2025

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S LETTER 2026

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. In him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; (Jn. 1:1,2,4)

Dear Family and Friends of the Xaverian Missionaries,

As we approach the celebration of Christmas, a particularly significant time for all of us, in which we recognize in that Child born in Palestine the incarnation of God. In the Christian tradition, God does not present Himself as an absolute reality distant from humanity: He is with us, He lives with us, rejoices and suffers with us. He is a God who enters our history.

Over this past year, I had the opportunity to meet brothers and sisters of different faiths, respectfully visiting some temples and shrines where God is venerated according to diverse traditions. In these places, as I listened attentively to the explanations, a natural comparison with Christianity arose within me. In the religions I encountered, I saw human beings moving toward God in an attitude of adoration, listening, and service. In Christianity, however, the movement is the opposite: it is God Himself who first comes to meet the human being, His creature. And it is in this encounter that the desire to adore Him, to love Him with all our being, to listen to Him, and to serve Him in every person is born in the heart. It is truly wonderful!

In many religions, there are sacred spaces where God makes Himself present; in Christianity, the ultimate sacred space of His living presence is the heart of every human being. This is the deep meaning of Christmas: "God with us."

Humanity is not abandoned at the mercy of events. It is true that in daily life we go through moments of uncertainty, darkness, lack of meaning, and powerlessness... but the LIGHT of the Lord remains eternal: it illuminates and gives meaning even to the apparent futility of existence. God is not an invention but a living reality waiting to be discovered in order to manifest Himself. Blessed is the one who finds Him, for nothing will ever be the same again.

Our Xaverian Family on the Journey

Our Xaverian Family continues its journey through each of our lives. I wish to share with you some significant moments and events that we have experienced throughout 2025.

First, let us give thanks to the Lord for reaching the end of the year with the gift of life and with the deep joy of feeling loved by Him. We experience this certainty through the affection and closeness of many people, like you. We thank the Lord because the desire that gives meaning to our vocation remains alive in our hearts: to bear witness to Jesus Christ where we live, with particular attention to those who yet do not know Him.

Among the year's events, the greatest concern has been instability in the Great Lakes region of the DRC, where the M23 rebel group has taken control of the cities of Goma and Bukavu. Our confreres live daily in uncertainty, sharing this sad and dramatic reality with the Congolese people.

At the Xaverian level, we celebrated two significant continental meetings, one in Africa and one in Asia, as part of the COSUMA (Conference of Major Superiors), which is held every six years. The communities of Bafoussam, Cameroon, and Taipei, Taiwan, hosted these events, which were precious moments of fraternal life and reflection on our missionary commitment in the different countries where we work.

We continued to accompany our young confreres with various sessions of ongoing formation. The quality of our missionary service depends mainly on the attention each of us gives to our own human and spiritual growth. One does not become a missionary once and for all: it is a daily journey that requires care and commitment. With this in mind, we are preparing a general meeting next June dedicated to a fundamental dimension of our vocation: our humanity. We have called it "Il volto umano del Saveriano - Xaverian Humanity." To be deeply human means to reflect the holiness of God; a humanity transformed by grace becomes a privileged channel for bearing witness to the Gospel.

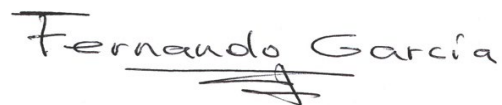
In Parma, the new "Francesco Marini" Center has been inaugurated, dedicated to promoting the Xaverian charism through three main areas: Ongoing Formation, MissioNet (for Xaverian digital communication), and the International Volunteer Project, born from the desire to train lay people from all the countries where we are present, preparing them for missionary service in our communities.

This year, again, our family has been enriched by the arrival of new members. Thirty young people made their first religious-missionary profession: they come from Indonesia, Mexico, the DRC, Burundi, Cameroon, and, for the first time, Mozambique. Twelve confreres have been ordained to the priesthood and have already begun their service in the communities to which they have been assigned.

We have also bid farewell to eleven confreres who have returned to the Father's House: Frs. Marco Moro, Eulogio Cuéllar Muñoz, Eugenio Juárez Hernández, Lino Sgarbossa, Donatien Lwiyo Mwishamba, Franco Manganello, Bartolomeo Elia, Alberto Lanaro, Quartilio Gabrielli, Sandro Peccati, and Antonio Chiofi. We are grateful for their witness to life. May they rest in the peace of the Lord.

Dear family and friends, I extend my best wishes to you for a Joyful Christmas and a New Year 2026 full of grace and blessings. Always keep in your hearts the divine presence of the One who is the source of all life. May the joy and strength that come from welcoming Emmanuel accompany you every day!

May the Lord Jesus Christ be known and loved by all!

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Fernando García". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underlining the name.

Fernando García Rodríguez, SX
General Superior