

**MESSAGE AND BRIEF GREETING**  
**to be read at Memorial Mass of Bishop Paul M. Boyle, C.P.**

Your Most Reverend Excellencies, my dear brother Passionists, Sisters and Lay members of our Passionist Family, priests and faithful here present: through Father Clemente Barrón, my personal delegate to the Memorial Service in Detroit and representative of the General Council of the Passionist Congregation living and working in 68 countries of the world, I share with you in your prayers for the eternal repose of Bishop Paul Michael Boyle who, having run the straight race has now finished his days in our midst soon after the Christmas celebrations and the feast of Epiphany, our Lord's manifestation.

Now that mystery, lived in faith during his many years of religious life and his episcopal ministry to which he devoted his life, will be manifested to him face-to-face in all its reality. That he may not be all alone in this his encounter with the Lord, we are accompanying Bishop Boyle in this sacrifice of the holy Eucharist and through our prayers beseeching God's mercy and smile as he faces the Eternal One and says on bended knee, "Here I am!"

I am quite convinced that his encounter with God will be, for Bishop Boyle, one of love, because he has offered Him his religious life at the service of his brethren, and Jesus has taught us in the Gospel that "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life." I recall with gratitude his efficacious actions at the service of his Congregation during his twelve years as Superior General from 1976 till 1988, marked by his strong sense of belonging.

One of his outstanding moments was when he guided and animated the 1982 General Chapter, when the Passionist Congregation its new Rule and Constitutions which govern its life and mission in the light of the second Vatican Council.

In fact, those Constitutions, beyond their solid Christological and juridical foundations which are of their specific competence, inspire a feeling of profound humanity and prophetic openness meant to confront the evils of our present-day world and the many challenges it presents. He was convinced, as was Saint Paul of the Cross, our Father and Founder, that the most effective remedy for the evils of our time is, even today, the Passion of Jesus, "the greatest and most overwhelming work of God's love."

The very heart of our Constitutions is in # 55 which states that, "We Passionists make the Paschal Mystery the center of our lives. This entails a loving commitment to follow Jesus Crucified, and a generous resolve to proclaim his Passion and death with faith and love. His Passion and death are no mere historical events. They are ever-present realities to people in the world today, 'crucified' as they are by injustice, by the lack of a deep respect for human life and by a hungry yearning for peace, truth, and the fullness of human existence." One cannot help but note how very forceful and relevant these words are today after twenty five years, which Bishop Boyle, together with the Passionist Congregation, made his own as the specific mission of his religious consecration and his pastoral ministry as a bishop.

Profound and convincing was his entire attitude and belief "cum ecclesia," whether as Superior General or as a bishop, and this became manifest in his life options and his words. I personally experienced this when I had the opportunity and grace to participate, as a young Provincial, in the 1982 General Chapter, as I've mentioned above, in the course of which the new Constitutions were formulated, and it was at that Chapter that I was elected a General Consultor. Hence I was with Father Paul M. Boyle both in the General Council and at our community of Saints John and Paul for all of six years, 1982-1988, during his second term as Superior General.

Those were unforgettable years of learning and experience. That was a General Council which gave the Church four bishops. Apart from Bishop Boyle, we have Bishops Norbert Dorsey and William Kenney whom I salute, and the late Bishop José Santos Iztueta who passed away August 27<sup>th</sup> last year, a missionary in the Peruvian Amazon region, Bishop of the diocese of Moyobamba.

I would like to point out an aspect of the personality of Bishop Boyle: even when he appeared to be a somewhat forceful and strong-willed character, he was open and always willing to modify his point of view and decisions he had already taken if he could be shown there were reasons and motivations which cast new light on what had already been decided.

He was decisive but never obstinate: to modify one's own opinions and decisions when presented with new facts in the course of a dialogue is truly a sign of intelligence, flexibility and respect for one's interlocutors.

Great was his interest and zeal for the missionary activity of the Congregation, and his concern in the face of situations of poverty. That was why he took an active part in the Conference of Men Religious Superiors in the United States, of which he was President from 1969 to 1974, and founded the Stewardship Services Inc., an organization which gives financial assistance to religious communities.

I would also like to remember him as the generous Pastor of the Apostolic Vicariate of Mandeville, Jamaica, in the West Indies. With courage and skill he dealt with highly complex problems involving personnel and the organization of his newly created diocese, in a zone of great poverty and, hence, with notable social tensions. He came to embody the evangelical icon of Jesus the Good Shepherd as he faced the needs of the people: "At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them, because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd." (Mt 9:36)

He was convinced that only thus would the Church, united to Christ, faithful to the Gospel, open with realism to the situation of today's world and loved by God, become a prophetic witness of "hope that does not disappoint..." trusting in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit which guides and impels us toward the fulfillment of God's promises. In fact, "the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." (cf Rm 5:5)

Even after he had finished his service as bishop in the diocese and retired in 2004 to the Passionist community in Louisville, KY, he didn't sit on his laurels but rather dedicated himself to appealing for the "Food for the Poor" program, through his sacramental and preaching ministry.

Prior to concluding this brief salute and remembrance, I should like to join with all of you in thanking Almighty God for the gift of Bishop Boyle to the Church and to our Congregation, just as I thank his parents and relatives. I recall his joyful pride in his Irish ascendancy, something he never forgot to laughingly remind others of.

Finally I'm thinking of the illness and suffering which marked his later years, which must have purified him of those human weaknesses common to us all; this was truly a participation in the Passion of Jesus which he had professed.

We shall remember Bishop Boyle with brotherly love and esteem and commend him, during the ensuing days, to our prayers and those of the Passionist religious communities which are required, by # 20 (a) of our General Regulations, to celebrate a Mass, if possible in community, in suffrage for his soul. May God receive him as a good and faithful servant and may He, Jesus, be his reward.

In the Communion of Saints, Bishop Boyle will continue to be present in our Congregation, in the diocese of Mandeville and in the Church.

May he rest in peace in the eternal love of God, together with Saint Paul of the Cross and all the greater Passionist Family in Heave. Amen!

(Most Rev.) Ottaviano D'Egidio  
Superior General, C.P.

Saints John & Paul, Rome, January 13<sup>th</sup> 2008