

PIARIST CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN THE PRESENCE OF VERACRUZ



Fr. Otilio Ramón Herrera Ruíz, Sch.P.



Mtro. Jorge Campa Pérez

What do you mean by Piarist Christian community?

It is a community of Christian communities that are leaven of the kingdom amid children and young people, mainly the most vulnerable. Each of its members has been called by the love of God to live a process of internalization of the life of Jesus and are accompanied by the members of their community. Its center is found in prayer and in the discernment of life to better love and serve their Father God amid the little ones and young people who have been left on the margins, in oblivion or who simply cannot, by themselves, complete their process of humanization.

It is important, therefore, to understand that in the Piarist Christian community there are different forms of participation, from those who consolidate their identity in the tradition and work of the Pious Schools and their fraternity, to those others who are beginning a process of identifying their Piarist vocation in the bosom of a community of adult Christian life with Calasanzian spirituality.

In both cases, they become yeast to grow within the dynamics and guidelines of the works, current and living presence of Joseph Calasanz.



How was the Christian community you are in born?

This has existed throughout the history of each of the 7 works in Veracruz. Many Piarists who have left testimony of God's presence in their lives in generations and generations of entire families.

However, for 6 years a new reality has been configured with a defined intention and understanding that the processes of substance, of conversion, are slow and require a lot of accompaniments. It is not, therefore, a question of encompassing much, but of building Calasanzian humanity, from a model of church in communion and in exit, ready to find with itself before the Lord and with the unprotected and weakened brother.

What is the Christian community in which you live like? Make a description of what is done, what groups there are and how it works.

The Christian community is made up of two religious communities (Santa Paula Montall -general house, Sagrada Familia, province of Mexico), 4 fraternity communities (Signs of the Kingdom -parish of the Holy Family, Paulina de la Vera Cruz and Gaudium et Spes -Colegio Cristóbal Colón; Galilea -Universidad Cristóbal Colón) and 4 communities of the Calasanz Adult Movement (Abba -Catechists, Anawin -Continuous Prayer, Nativity -Calasanz Social Center, Wine and Bread -Pastoralists). And 4 more communities are in formation.

In addition, a systematic work of meeting between teachers and managers has begun a year ago to form teams of shared mission.

In the communities, we can find 4 dynamics of reflection according to the moment in which they are found: Community Prayer (Lectio Divina); Discernment of Life, Formation and Discernment of Mission. With them, the interior life and piarist community spirituality are consolidated. In addition, they participate in Eucharistic celebrations, week-long Ignatian exercises or in ordinary life, retreats and each of the members participates in the Piarist mission, either through a ministry or a specific service.

In addition, each one contributes to the economy of the works with the greatest need, mainly in the Calasanz Social Center. And in the sustenance to the formation of people who exercise a service to the communities in the style of a ministry.

Among the Piarist religious of the two communities, closeness, and cooperation in terms of mission has been increasing. We participate together in moments of prayer, common retreats, and informal meetings to discuss the themes of the mission. It is necessary to continue growing in unity and fidelity to the charism, to share it with credibility in front of the other communities.

The relationship between religious and laity is increasing and significant because we are understanding that alone and in isolation, we cannot strengthen the charism in our works. Instead, together we allow the processes to continue and become embodied in the realities of the Piarist presence.

What significance does the community have in the project of general pastoral care of the presence?

At this time, the Piarist Christian community is consolidating different actions for the generation of the Piarist subject, vocations with Calasanzian identity and spirit, in such a way that they can strategically nourish the different pastorals of the sections of the colleges and universities, as well as the works of non-formal education and in the parish.

Under the discernment of the communities, they have been organized according to the possibilities of each one, the accompaniment of people involved not only in the school ministry, but also in the accompaniment of teachers, parents, guardians, and management staff. We have understood that Calasanz's evangelizing proposal illuminates the entire curriculum, including the way of relating to each other and managing the works in a framework of synodality to always be on the way out.

Some people of the fraternity carry out research to update the profiles of children and young people, thus locating the ways in which poverty is corrupting the possibility of a new humanity, more sensitive and co-responsible in the culture of care in every way. Thus, it is possible to attend with evangelical love to each one according to his needs and dynamisms...

What do you propose so that the community consolidates and is the soul of the Piarist mission?, What difficulties do you have?

We love to think of 4 ideas that Calasanz mentioned when the edict of reduction of the Pious Schools was received, and that Fr. Pedro Aguado reminded us:

- a) Keep working for children
- b) Stay united

- c) Trust in God
- d) And don't lose your joy.

We are clear that we have started the journey, but we do not know where we are going because we discern that with Jesus. Let him guide us and that at a community pace, even if it is slow, allow us to be WITNESSES of his love and so and only then, sent to continue the work that many religious and lay Piarists have brought to our days.

We hope that our ministry will continue to be the seed of the Kingdom among the little ones and the most vulnerable, at the moment and place we have to live. We choose to look at reality with hope and remain attentive to what the Spirit is suggesting, without holding it in forced times and rhythms.

We trust that only by listening to Him with humility is it possible that whatever we do will come from Him and make it prosper according to His will. We count on Him and He transforms our clay into the bearers of a Life that will never end to give drink to the children and young people who seek Him.

Fr. Otilio Ramón Herrera Ruíz, Sch.P.

Director of Campus Ministry of the University and the Cristóbal Colón College
 Advisor to the pastoral care of the Calasanz School
 Be part of the Veracruz presence team
 University Professor
 Rector of Community

Mtro. Jorge Campa Pérez

Coordinator of Piarist Identity, Universidad Cristóbal Colón
 Director of the Calasanz Social Center
 Animator of communities of the Calasanz Adult Movement and fraternity

