

## Nota de Roma a los centros de san Rafael, diciembre 2024

We attach excerpts of a letter received from Rome that can guide the planning of sr work in your ctr in 2025.

The Bull *Spes non confundit* which Pope Francis wrote to convoke the Jubilee year, give ideas to help all of us in the Work and especially those directly involved in Saint Raphael work as we are all Pilgrims of Hope.

Hope is like an engine - it generates movement - and charity is the petrol- it feeds the engine, keeps it running. Our hope does not come from our own strength, but from Jesus, who has promised us that he will be with us until the end of time, come what may. When the fruits are slow in coming, the frustration or discouragement we might experience would be a sign that the Lord is inviting us to mature in our love. To be with Him, to work with Him, to share His Life, to give with full hands, united with the others of the Work and to trust that the fruits will come when and how He wants them to: this is already our reward, from the Lord comes the hopeful joy of the apostle.

This year we also want to help the girls of St. Raphael to have great human ideals and to entrust them, along with their own lives, to the hope of Christ. The first and fundamental way to help them is to lead them to the source, the Lord. Let them be challenged by his questions in the Gospel: "What do you desire? why do you fear?"

(Mt 8:26), why did you doubt? (Mt 14:31), what do you want? (Mt 20:21), what do you want me to do for you? (Mt 20:32), why do you call me good? (Mk 10:18), why do you tempt me? (Mt 22:18), why are you frightened and admit such thoughts into your hearts? (Lk 24:38), whoever lives and believes in me will never die forever, do you believe this? (Jn 11:26), woman, why do you weep? what do you seek? (Jn 20:15).

They are brief and powerful questions that the Lord addresses to each one, in a voice that we can imagine would be soft and affectionate, with a look full of love, inviting sincere confidence. In Jesus' conversation, we personalize our own response, with what we carry in our own hearts.

Another igniter of hope is the feeling of being loved, understood, valued for who you are. In this sense, how much the family atmosphere in the St. Raphael centers helps! The experience of unconditional love is fertile ground to accept oneself even in one's weaknesses and to hope to improve; to dare to put one's talents into action; to risk one's own comfort to serve others, with generosity. How important it is to have someone at your side who believes in you, who sees all the good things you have that sometimes you yourself do not realize, who supports and encourages you in your struggles, without throwing in the towel, like a good coach. Spiritual accompaniment with the priest and with a friend from home is a privileged means to value in the Year of Hope, along with the sacrament of reconciliation.

Thirdly, the genuineness of the charism of the Work gives a lot of hope: work, the cornerstone of our spirit, is a place of hope to build a better, more human and more Christian world. This begins by studying well and with an eagerness to serve.

Rome, December 2024