

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Calabrian Family,

once again we pronounce together with St. John Calabria: *ego dixi, nunc coepi!*

Let's start this new year with joy, because what awaits us is not ordinary: it is a passage, a relaunch, a new beginning. Today we can recognize and celebrate a line that continues our journey, but that is renewed. A line that comes from afar - from the intuitions of the Final Document of the XII General Chapters, *Start* and from the Document of the Mid-Sexennium Assembly, *Underlines* - and which **now takes shape in a new way**.

In recent years we have insisted on fundamental themes: our **identity**, the **spirit of belonging**, formation, opportunities **to meet and get to know each other**, to share the mission and grow as a living body. We have understood, even from our fragility, that nothing authentic can be thought of alone. And precisely for this reason, the two-year period 2026-2027 that opens before us will be lived as **a great celebration of our Calabrian Family**, walking together, listening to each other, valuing the richness of the different branches of the Opera.

It will be a challenge and a great experiment in communion for all of us: to overcome the temptation to propose each one as if we were "the" Calabrian Family, and **instead to rediscover the joy and strength to proclaim our charism together**, as a single reality, plural and synodal.

In 2023, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of St. John Calabria, we had a beautiful and powerful experience: the moving exhibition "*Terra & Sangue*" (Soil & Blood), which had united, involved, made us walk. That was a seed. Today a new fruit is born. From today on, we are united by a new project, unified in vision and modalities: the **Agora of the Calabrian Family**.



A unitary project - yes - because **the thought that inspires it, the formative and charismatic contents, the basic lines and the proposal are common** to all the Opera in the world. But **it is also a special project for each territory**, because everyone will have to embody it according to their own history, their own faces, their own needs. This will be a test of our maturity: not to wait for everything to arrive ready-made, but to become protagonists of this celebration of our unique identity, with the ability to adapt the proposal, personalize it, build it tailored to the

realities in which we live, work, and are witnesses of the same unique, great charism. Thus ***the Agora of the territories will be expressions of a single great Agora of the Calabrian Family!***

From today it is the Agora that unites us.

From today it is the Agora that focuses on relationships, encounters, journeys, shared formation, and lived identity.

From today the Agora is our "common space", the theological place where the Calabrian Family grows in the world.

It is no coincidence that the path was delivered to the Territorial Councils of the Calabrian Family last December 4, a day that speaks to the heart of our history: the anniversary of the death of St. John Calabria and Brother Francesco Perez. They will be the two patrons of our Agora, two witnesses who remind us that ***holiness is the concrete dream that God has for each one of us, in ordinary life, in charity, in trust in the Providence.***

And as we invoke them, we cannot fail to turn our thoughts also to Fr. Luigi Pedrollo. We hope that he will soon be officially recognized as the third patron saint of this Agora, because he is already in its heart today: a teacher of communion, of unity, of the Family.

Dear friends,

With this spirit and with this shared responsibility, we move forward. ***The future of the Calabrian Family is not a legacy to be preserved, but a "construction site" to be built together.*** With courage, with creativity, with unshakable trust in the Providence.

May the Agora be for all of us a true ***school of charism.***

A gym of communion.

A permanent invitation to walk as brothers and sisters... because our holiness is a "we together".

Thank you to each of you for what you are and for what you will bring on in this journey. Let's move forward together, Calabrian Family... courage and forward *in Domino!*

***May the Lord bless this Agora that unites us today,
make it fruitfy in the Gospel,
luminous in the Spirit,
bold in charity;
and through the intercession of St. John Calabria,
of Brother Francesco Perez and Fr. Luigi Pedrollo,
may it become a welcoming home,
a school that trains,
a community that serves
and a family that bears witness to his Providence.
In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.***